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ABSTRACT

A study of a random sample of 220 male inmates at New York State's Sing Sing Correctional Facility was conducted in the summer of 1989. Questionnaires were distributed directly to the inmates. A questionnaire in Spanish was administered when appropriate. It was found that 79 percent were high school dropouts, including 78 percent of the black respondents, 69 percent white, and 87 percent Hispanic. Dropouts experienced a significantly greater rate of grade retention, school transfers, misbehavior, poor attendance, and poor academic performance than did graduates in prison. They also had significantly less extracurricular activity. Major reasons for dropping out were wanting to work and being bored with courses. In their last 2 years of school only half had had contact with a counselor. Adverse socioeconomic conditions and poor role modeling probably contributed to dropping out and criminality. At the time of arrest only 52 percent of the dropouts were employed, compared to 71 percent of the graduates. Both graduates and dropouts exhibited prevalent drug use, gang affiliation, and relatively low income. Most dropouts regretted their decision to drop out. Eighty-five percent of the sample had participated in the prison's educational programs. Of the 173 dropouts, 103 had acquired a General Educational Development (GED) diploma, with 89 acquiring the GED in prison. Sixteen previous dropouts and 11 graduates attained college degrees while incarcerated. (English and Spanish questionnaires and a 10-page bibliography are included.) (CML)

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EDUCATIONAL HISTORIES OF INCARCERATED MALE FELONS WITH AN EMPHASIS ON PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL, CAUSES OF DROPPING OUT, AND PARTICIPATION IN PRISON EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Robert T. Stephens

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The school dropout problem is so serious that corrective action can no longer await research results (Mann, 1985). From 1972 to 1984, the nation's student dropout rate increased from 23% to 26% (Solorzano, 1986), and in 1990, Clements, director for data improvement for the Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington, D.C., stated that the dropout rate is still about 25% based on the latest approximations. Some cities, such as New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago, have experienced a dropout rate in excess of 40% (Grossnickle, 1986; Hammack, 1986; Strother, 1986). Although 1988's statistics show a slight decline in overall high school dropout rates, the U.S. Department of Education has stated that the Hispanic dropout rate nationwide rose to nearly double that of black students and nearly triple that of whites (Johnson, 1989). In an age of high technology and increasing emphasis on educational credentials, this statistic creates an alarm, particularly since dropping out of school correlates positively to high unemployment or underemployment ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987; Grossnickle, 1986; Peng, 1983; Polk, 1984; "School

Dropouts," 1986; Solorzano, 1986). Dropping out of school also correlates positively to criminal behavior (Grossnickle, 1986; Thornberry, Moore, and Christenson 1985). Of all the social and individual problems related to dropping out, the criminal component may be the most serious and most expensive in human suffering.

As of June 1989, there were 673,565 inmates in the nation's federal and state prisons (Malcolm 1989). The majority of inmates are high school dropouts (Innes 1988). In some states nearly 90% of the prison population are dropouts, and 75% in juvenile court proceedings are dropouts (Grossnickle, 1986). According to the New York State Department of Correctional Services ("Report," 1986), 79% of the inmates incarcerated in New York did not complete high school. With such a high percentage of criminals lacking a complete formal education, it is not surprising that Thornberry et al. (1985) found that dropping out of high school was positively related to subsequent criminal behavior.

In this study a survey was conducted on incarcerated male felons at Sing Sing Correctional Facility in Ossining, N.Y. An examination of their educational and criminal histories, personal and socioeconomic background, perceptions of school, and reasons for dropping out were made. Also examined was to what extent and why men in prison attend educational

programs in prison and what their hopes for the future were. Distinctions were sought between those felons who dropped out of school, and those who did not.

Statement of Problem

The finding that dropping out of school significantly and positively relates to subsequent criminal involvement (Thornberry et al., 1985) and the fact that 79% of the felons incarcerated in New York State are school dropouts (Report, 1986) suggested a need to investigate why men in prison are primarily dropouts. To accomplish this, several subproblems were investigated. Criminal dropouts were then compared with criminal graduates.

Subproblems

The nine subproblems (objectives) were:

1. to profile the incarcerated male's educational, vocational and criminal history.
2. to profile the incarcerated male's personal and socioeconomic background.
3. to ascertain the incarcerated male's general perception of school from his elementary grades to the time of last attendance.
4. to determine what image of self-perception characterized the incarcerated male when enrolled in school.

5. to determine the parental and school-related support incarcerated male dropouts had prior to dropping out of school.

6. to identify the school and/or other related factors which incarcerated male dropouts believed led to their dropping out.

7. to ascertain how criminal dropouts view their decision to drop out and if they see their imprisonment related to their lack of high school completion.

8. to determine to what extent inmates utilize the prison's educational system and why they attend school in prison.

9. to ascertain the criminal dropout's present perception of education and the future aspirations of all subjects surveyed.

Definitions

Correctional Facility is any place operated by the Department of Correctional Services and designated by the commissioner of corrections as a place for confinement of persons under sentence of imprisonment or persons committed for failure to pay a fine. It will not include any place operated by the department for the care and confinement of persons who have been found to be mentally defective or mentally ill by a court and who are confined in such a place pursuant to an order of a court based upon such a finding.

Criminal History of the subjects was ascertained with a questionnaire through their self-admitted use of illicit drugs and their self-admitted criminal arrest records.

Dropout is a person who did not graduate from high school by either withdrawing voluntarily or by being expelled involuntarily.

Educational History of the subjects was ascertained with a questionnaire by seeking their recollections of what kind of school they attended, their academic performance (measured from excellent to failing), their participation in extracurricular activities, whether they had learning disabilities and were these disabilities addressed, their attendance in school, whether they ever received corporal punishment, or were sent to the office for misbehavior, their level of grade completion, their ability to write, and their present propensity to read.

Felon is a person who has been convicted of a felony.

Felony is a crime of a graver or more serious nature than those designated as misdemeanors, e.g., aggravated assault felony as contrasted with simple assault (misdemeanor) and a crime punishable by death or imprisonment for a term exceeding one year.

General Educational Development (GED) is the test taken to obtain a high school equivalency diploma.

Inmate is a person confined to a correctional facility, penitentiary or the like.

Juvenile Delinquent is a person over 7 and less than 16 years who does any act which, if done by an adult, would constitute a crime.

Maximum Security Institution is a correctional facility for inmates with generally 48 months or more to parole eligibility surrounded by either 40-foot high walls or double fences topped and banked with razor wire and where inmates are confined to single cells averaging 60 square feet.

Parental Support was determined by asking subjects with a questionnaire if their parents or guardians took a personal interest in them, whether their parents/guardians came to their school when called or voluntarily participated in any school decision or event, what was the reaction of their parents or guardians when they dropped out, and did the parents/guardians discuss alternatives to dropping out with them.

Personal Background was ascertained through age, ethnic background, marital status, primary language spoken, and military service.

Prison has the same definition as "correctional facility."

Recidivism is the return of an ex-prisoner to a correctional facility with a new sentence or for a parole violation.

School-Related Support was determined with a questionnaire by asking subjects how often they had contact with a school counselor in their last year of school, whether their parents/guardians were ever called to the school, and before the subject dropped out, did any school official discuss alternatives to this decision.

Self-Perception was ascertained with a questionnaire by asking subjects whether they cared about what their teachers thought of them as people, what academic grade would they have given themselves overall, and whether they felt they fit in and were considered just as important as other students in their school.

Socioeconomic Background was ascertained with a questionnaire by asking subjects about their neighborhood setting, gang affiliation, by whom they were reared, the educational level of their parents, whether their parents or siblings ever dropped out or were incarcerated, and the subjects' occupation and employment record.

Vocational History was determined by ascertaining the vocational and job training the subjects received in junior/senior high school and after leaving school.

Conceptual Rationale

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) has reported that inmates in state prisons are predominantly poor

young adult males with less than a high school education ("Prisons and Prisoners," 1982). According to the BJS in 1979, 58% of the inmates nationwide were school dropouts, leading this agency to conclude, "The lack of a high school diploma undoubtedly contributed to their employment problems and low income during the year prior to the arrest that led to incarceration. Only 60% had been working full time," (p. 1).

Innes, reporting for the BJS in 1988, noted that results in the 1986 survey were virtually unchanged from 1979, except that there was a small but significant increase in the percentage of incarcerated Hispanics and that the percent of dropouts increased from 58 to 62%, with the median number of years of education dropping from 11 in 1979 to 10 in 1986.

In New York, 77% of the state's male inmate population is black or Hispanic, generally of low socioeconomic background, and about four-fifths are school dropouts ("Report," 1986).

In 1985, Thornberry, Moore and Christenson reported that dropping out of school was significantly and positively related to subsequent male adult criminal behavior, with crime rates being higher for dropouts than high school graduates. Their findings, and the fact that 79% of the male felons in New York State are school dropouts, signified a need to investigate why

such a large percent of criminals are school dropouts and how they may have differed from school graduates who were also incarcerated.

Numerous researchers have investigated the dropout problem (Abram and Cobb, 1979; Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack, and Rock, 1986; Fine, 1986; Finn, 1989; Gadwa and Griggs, 1985; Grossnickle, 1986; Hammack, 1986; Kumar and Bergstrand, 1979; Mann, 1986; Natriello, 1985; Peng, 1983; Ruby and Law, 1983, 1987; Rumberger, 1983, 1987; Self, 1985; Sikes and Hildebrand, 1986; Smith, 1986; Tidwell, 1988; Wehlage and Rutter, 1985, 1986;) as well as the possible effect school has on student behavior, delinquency and criminality (Cohen, 1955; Elliott, 1966; Elliott and Voss, 1974; Frease, 1973; Hirschi, 1969; Kelly and Pink, 1972; Phillips and Kelly, 1979; Polk and Schafer, 1972; Rhodes and Reiss, 1969; Thornberry et al. 1985). The research findings indicate that not only are the causes of dropping out varied and complex, but also that the problem shows little sign of lessening. Natriello, Pallas and McDill (1986) have stressed that although many studies had characterized the dropout, it was essential for researchers to continue monitoring potential dropouts and their background characteristics, particularly since the dropout problem continues to change in ethnic and socioeconomic makeup, e.g., the percent of Hispanic dropouts has noticeably increased (Hammack, 1986; Ruby and Law, 1987).

The characteristics of the criminal population have also experienced changes in ethnic and socioeconomic makeup, e.g., the percent of Hispanics has significantly increased in the prison population (Innes, 1988). For these reasons, prisons also need continual investigation and monitoring.

The General Accounting Office (GAO) has reported that "the proportions of dropouts, especially poor youths, blacks and Hispanics, is an issue warranting the attention of the education community" ("School Dropouts," 1986, p. 13). The GAO has noted that, in addition to self-reported reasons for dropping out, it is also "valuable to measure the circumstances that surround decisions for dropping out; for example, analyzing data on characteristics of youth's family background, school experience, and personal characteristics" (p. 13).

By profiling the incarcerated male's educational, vocational and criminal history as well as personal and socioeconomic background, the researcher gathered the information called for by Natriello, Pallas, Aaron and McDill (1986) as well as that called for by the GAO, which stated that it was essential for researchers to continue monitoring the background characteristics of dropouts, particularly in the poor, black and Hispanic groups, since these are the groups whose members are most likely to drop out and whose numbers continue to

grow in the school-aged population. These two groups are also most representative of the prison population in New York State ("Report," 1986).

By ascertaining incarcerated men's perception of the educational system they attended, the parental and school-related support they received, and the reasons those who dropped out believed led them to dropping out, assessment was made on the educational system as well as parental influences. Factors which may have led to their dropping out and possibly to crime were also explored.

Furthermore, in determining to what extent inmates were using the prison's educational system (particularly those who had dropped out) and why they attended school programs in prison, the correctional system may be better able to serve its inmate population. If so, this will further maximize the inmate's chances for a successful return and assimilation into society.

Need for the Study

Natriello et al. (1986) reported that there is a need to research the dropout phenomenon and the consequences of dropping out, particularly since "our knowledge about negative effects of dropping out for earlier cohorts of youth may not apply to today's dropouts" (p. 436).

A number of studies had surveyed school dropouts in the general population to ascertain their reasons for dropping out and to understand the dropout phenomenon (see sources cited in section under "Conceptual Rationale"). However, no one had done such an examination of a population of incarcerated criminals where 8 out of 10 are dropouts and where the social and individual costs are so high. By ascertaining the information specified in the objectives, an understanding of the dropout problem as it related to the convicted felon provided new insight into the factors which led to dropping out for students at risk of becoming criminals.

There also existed a need to identify the school-related variables associated with dropping out so educators could take those steps necessary and within their power to remedy this problem. Preventing school dropout may lead to a reduction of unemployment and underemployment as dropouts experience greater unemployment than their graduate counterparts as well as lower quality, lower skilled, and lower paid jobs ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987; Kumar and Bergstrand, 1979; "School Dropouts," 1986). Additional benefits may include a lessening of welfare, crime, and poor health ("School Dropouts," 1986). Furthermore, reducing dropouts today may also lead to a reduction in future dropouts as the incidence of dropping out appears to be

higher in families where parents are also dropouts ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987; Elliott and Voss, 1974; Gadwa and Griggs, 1985; Grossnickle, 1986; Kumar and Bergstrand, 1979; Ruby and Law, 1987; Rumberger, 1983; "School Dropouts," 1986; Self, 1985).

Delimitations

All data were collected from a single all-male maximum security facility at New York State's Sing Sing Correctional Facility, Ossining, New York, which limited generalizing from the results. As the study only dealt with criminals, there were limitations on generalizing the findings to non-criminals as well as comparing criminal dropouts to non-criminal dropouts.

Also, many questions on the questionnaire (Appendix B) required respondents to recall information, events, or feelings of their past. Moser and Kalton (1972) caution, "For questions dealing with the past, serious attention must, therefore, be given to the respondent's ability to recall the required information accurately" (p. 331), particularly if the event happened long ago or was trivial (Converse and Presser, 1986; Moser and Kalton, 1972). Therefore, memory error was possible.

However, most of the questions in the questionnaire were of a closed format, which may have acted as "one possible surrogate for aided recall" (Sudman and Bradburn, 1974, p. 80).

CHAPTER II

RELATED LITERATURE

Factors Related to Dropping Out

Research studies confirm there is a disproportionate number of dropouts within low-socioeconomic and minority groups (Johnson, 1989; Kumar and Bergstrand, 1979; "School Dropouts," 1986; Self, 1985), suggesting poverty, cultural differences, and language difficulties may increase the likelihood of dropping out. Hammack (1986), in reviewing dropout reports of large cities, noted that in Chicago, whites had a dropout rate of 34.5 percent, blacks 45.1 percent and Hispanics 46.9 percent. Ruby and Law (1987) reported that the U.S. dropout rate for blacks surpasses the white by 40 percent, and the Hispanic rate is 50 percent higher than the white rate with the rate being between 70-80 percent for Puerto Ricans living in U.S. cities.

Other characteristic factors related to dropping out are poor academic performance (Hahn, 1987; Natriello, McDill and Pallas, 1985; Ruby and Law, 1987; Smith, 1986; Tidwell, 1988), misbehavior in school (Alpert and Dunham, 1986; "Dealing with Dropouts," 1987; Dunham and Alpert, 1987; Ekstrom et al., 1986; Wehlage and Rutter,

1986), high absenteeism (Grossnickle, 1986; Hess, 1987; Natriello et al., 1985; Ruby and Law, 1983; Self, 1985; Smith, 1986; Wehlage and Rutter, 1986), and being a family member whose parents are dropouts ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987; Elliott and Voss, 1974; Gadwa and Griggs, 1985; Grossnickle, 1986; Kumar and Bergstrand, 1979; Ramsey, 1986; Ruby and Law, 1987; Rumberger, 1983; Self, 1985).

Additional factors related to dropping out are reading below grade level ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987; Grossnickle, 1986; Hess, 1987; "School Dropouts," 1986; Self, 1985; Smith, 1986), prior grade retention ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987; Hammack, 1986, 1989; Hess, 1987; Natriello et al., 1985; Smith, 1986), having a learning disability or emotional problems, (Hahn, 1987), low participation level in extracurricular activities (Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack and Rock, 1986; Finn, 1989), attending an urban rather than suburban school ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987), growing up in a home with only one natural parent (Brodinsky, 1989; Ekstrom et al., 1986; Hahn, 1987), being in a family that receives welfare (Hahn, 1987; Stern, 1987), having parents who do not monitor their child's activities (Alpert and Dunham, 1986; "Dealing with Dropouts," 1987; Ekstrom et al., 1986), and having friends who are dropouts (Alpert and Dunham, 1986; "Dealing with Dropouts," 1987; Dunham and Alpert, 1987; Kumar and

Bergstrand, 1979; Ruby and Law, 1987).

Factors seen by dropouts themselves for leaving school prematurely are dislike of school ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987; Dunham and Alpert, 1987; Kumar and Bergstrand, 1979; "School Dropouts," 1986; Smith, 1986; Tidwell, 1988), or not seeing the relevance of school to their future (Alpert and Dunham, 1986; Farrell, Peguero, Lindsey and White, 1988; Grossnickle, 1986; Ruby and Law, 1983; Wagner, 1984), the need or attractiveness of employment (Hahn, 1987; Kumar and Berstrand, 1979; Peng, 1983; Tidwell, 1988; Wagner, 1984) and pregnancies (Hahn, 1987; Kumar and Berstrand, 1979; Peng, 1983; Ruby and Law, 1987; Rumberger, 1983; Tidwell, 1988).

Models and Theories Explaining Dropout

Alpert and Dunham (1986), in developing a model for predicting whether academically marginal youths would drop out or remain in school, were able to classify 92 percent of their subjects correctly into the dropout or non-dropout categories using five predictive variables. The five variables were: misbehavior in school, not seeing school as relevant to future job success, doing poorly in school, having parents who do not monitor the child's activities and having friends who dropped out.

In 1987, Dunham and Alpert tested their model on 137 juvenile delinquents, 47 of whom were still in school. This time using eight predictor variables they were able

to classify 82% of their subjects. The eight predictor variables were: misbehavior in school, dislike of school, dislike of classes, use of drugs, having friends who dropped out, not liking to live with parents, having friends who were troublemakers and not living with both parents.

Dunham and Alpert theorize that although misbehavior is the most significant factor in predicting school dropout, such misbehavior may be more a symptom of overall student dissatisfaction with the entire school experience. Enjoyment of the school experience and separation of peer influences would have a positive effect on school completion. Also, the closer the student-parental bond, the greater the likelihood of school completion.

Natriello, Pallas and McDill's (1986) theoretical model (1986) for explaining dropout sees the student's personal and social characteristics as determining the kind of learning and experiences he will encounter in school. If the school fosters a negative attitude and lack of response for the needs of potential dropouts, the dropout's negative characteristics will be reinforced. Both student characteristics and school processes influence the act of dropping out.

Cohen (1955) believed the school setting was a place where youth of different social levels competed for status based on middle-class standards. Cohen saw

the lower social class youth as having the most problems in the middle-class milieu because of their relative lack of training in discipline and social order. He theorized that youth of the lower class would be the most likely to fail academically and behaviorally since "it is extremely difficult to reward, however subtly, successful conformity without at the same time, by implication, condemning and punishing the non-conformist" (p. 113). The teachers of these lower social class youths, in all probability, were the product of the middle-class, hired by a middle-class board to teach middle-class values, and did not have the time or patience to contend with disruptive youths. Cohen maintained, "In terms of academic achievement, the failures in the classroom are drawn disproportionately from the lower-class levels." (p. 115). Subsequently, to adjust to the frustration of failure, Cohen reasoned these lower class male youths would turn to delinquency and the gang to find standards they could meet successfully.

Cohen's view has been appropriately termed strain theory and has gained support from Elliott, 1966; Elliott and Voss, 1974; Frease, 1973; Kelly and Pink, 1972; Polk and Schafer, 1972; Rhodes and Reiss, 1969.

In contrast to strain theory is social control theory (Hirschi, 1969) which sees the school as a controlling institution. It is when the individual no

longer values his attachment to school, nor cares about what teachers think of him, that he is more likely to commit a delinquent act. According to Hirschi, positive feelings and attitudes toward controlling institutions (such as schools) and persons in authority (such as teachers) make for strong bonding and social control. In contrast, the student "... who does not like school or does not care 'what teachers think' is likely to believe that school has no right to control him." (p. 127).

Although strain and control theories offer divergent views regarding the cause of misbehavior, it is the school and its environment as well as the child's view of school that are of critical importance. Strain theory says the child sees the school as a source of frustration and failure and thus he reacts by misbehaving. Social control theorists say when the child loses interest, respect and attachment for the school and its teachers, he is no longer governed by legitimate rules and misbehaves. In either case, the child does poorly in school, misbehaves, and is more apt to drop out. That misbehavior may lead to dropping out is also an aspect consistent with Dunham and Alpert's model (1987) previously discussed.

Akin to strain theory is the frustration-self-esteem model (Finn, 1989) for understanding school dropout and juvenile delinquency. This model states

that if a student has a history of poor academic performance, he will become frustrated and develop a poor self-image. Due to this frustration and poor self-image, the student rejects school. He then seeks out alternative activities less acceptable to society, but ones in which success can be experienced. Alternative activities may be class disruption, absenteeism, or delinquency. Eventually this antisocial behavior results in suspension, expulsion, or total rejection of the system by the student in the act of dropping out.

Finally, the participation-identification model reviewed by Finn (1989) says the more a student participates in classroom and other school activities, the more he learns to identify with the school. Through participation, the student develops a bonding or attachment to the school (an element of social control theory), making failure and delinquency less likely than for those who do not partake in such activities. Those students who do not participate in school activities tend to alienate or disengage themselves from the school environment. Over time, this disengagement manifests itself in misbehavior and delinquency, which leads to poor academic performance and eventual dropping out. Participation in this model has four levels. Level one is student response to directions or questions given by teachers. Level two involves initiation of questions and dialogue by students with teachers. Level three

involves extracurricular activities. Level four involves student participation in school curriculum and discipline.

Post Dropout Status

In a longitudinal study called High School and Beyond, Peng (1983) reported that over a two-year period more than 27% of the male dropouts surveyed were unemployed and those who were working were working in unskilled jobs. The report also stated that about 25% of the males and 17% of the female dropouts participated in some form of training program shortly after dropping out with 14% of the males and 9% of the females taking part in the GED program. Similar school-return statistics have been reported by Elliott and Voss (1974); Kumar and Bergstrand (1979); the General Accounting Office in "School Dropouts" (1986) and the U.S. Department of Education in "Dealing with Dropouts" (1987).

In general, findings show that job opportunities are poor and unemployment rates greater for dropouts than their graduate counterparts ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987; Kumar and Bergstrand, 1979; "School Dropouts," 1986). The General Accounting Office reported in "School Dropouts" (1986) that one in four dropouts ages 16-24 was unemployed compared with one in

ten high school graduates, with the employment situation being even worse for black dropouts.

The Decision to Drop Out in Retrospect

Many dropouts, even shortly after dropping out, believed their decision to be a mistake (Combs and Cooley, 1968; "Dealing with Dropouts," 1987; Peng, 1983).

Abram and Cobb (1979), in questioning former dropouts and their parents, found that both dropouts and their parents believed the choice to leave school early was a bad one and the majority of dropouts and their parents believed it was important for their child to earn a high school certificate.

In contrast, Jordan-Davis (1984) has reported that more than 50% of their subjects were content with their decision to drop out, citing employment opportunities (71% were employed) as the primary advantage to leaving school, particularly the Hispanic dropouts. The majority of jobs held were low skilled and low paying.

Factors Related to Crime

Causes for crime as with causes for dropping out of school are many and varied. Jeffery (1977) contends that in most criminal analyses, crime is viewed as a dependent variable only, which in itself is a methodological mistake. Jeffery contends that causal

relationships for criminality are difficult to demonstrate because variables such as poverty, education, race, age, sex, and income are not independent of one another, but interact in many combinations. He concluded that the multiple variables associated with crime and delinquency were interactive, and that criminal behavior should be looked at as both an independent as well as dependent variable as it, too, is interactive.

Farrington, Ohlin and Wilson (1986) noted that longitudinal research studies have shown that criminal offenses are highest between the ages of 15 and 18. The earlier the onset of criminal activity, the longer the criminal's career and the greater the total offenses committed.

In reviewing the literature, these researchers concluded that the best predictors for criminality at an early age were poor behavior in school, economic deprivation, having a parent who was a convicted criminal, low intelligence and poor parental child-rearing, i.e., poor supervision, cruel or neglecting attitudes and intra-family conflict. The researchers stated that early preschool prevention programs offering intellectual stimulation, such as found in the Head Start Program, have resulted in increased future school success rates and high school completion rates as well as decreased delinquency and crime. However, Brodinsky

(1989) has reported that less than 20% of low-income families have their children participate in Head Start.

Dropout and Criminality

Many of the predictors cited in the research for criminality are the same cited for dropping out of school. Although most experts agree that dropping out of school and criminality are related, causality is difficult to demonstrate (Jeffery, 1977). Nevertheless, it is increasingly clear that although a dropout may not be a criminal, a criminal is most likely a dropout.

Thornberry et al. (1985) indicated that dropping out of high school was positively related to later male adult criminal behavior, with crime rates being higher for dropouts than high school graduates, particularly in the latter teen years and early twenties. Even with age, social status and race held constant, dropping out still related to higher arrest rates than did graduates in the years following departure from school. For black dropouts, the crime rates continued to be higher than those of black graduates even in later adulthood.

In analyzing research data from a sample of more than one thousand inmates drawn from the states of Louisiana, Pennsylvania, and Washington, Bell, Conrad, and Suppa (1984) concluded that most inmates left school after tenth grade, but were performing somewhat below the seventh grade, with 42% of the sample functioning at

or below the fifth grade level in reading and math. Findings also indicated that minorities (58%) were clearly disproportionately represented in the prison population, and that most inmates came from unstable home environments and had childhood problems, including drug and alcohol abuse.

Elliott (1966) and Elliott and Voss (1974), in two unrelated studies involving high school dropouts, concluded that delinquency as well as dropping out were a student's reaction to academic failure and low self-esteem. In a four-year longitudinal study comprised initially of 2,617 ninth grade students, Elliott and Voss (1974) concluded that the frustration of failure in school resulted in increased delinquent behavior which in turn increased the likelihood of academic failure. The two were mutually reinforcing and both were alternative adaptations to failure. In support of strain theory, Elliott and Voss saw the climate of the school as an aggravator of delinquent youths' problems.

In contrast and in support of social control theory, Thornberry et al. (1985) found that in 16 and 18 year-old boys who dropped out, criminal behavior increased in the year following dropping out of school.

Elliott and Voss (1974) and Thornberry et al. (1985) are at odds in determining when misconduct is the greatest for delinquents. However, they, as well as Palmore and Hammond (1964), correlated criminal behavior

to failure in school. Other findings linking failure in school to delinquency have been reported by Frease (1973), Hirschi (1969), Kelly and Pink (1972), Polk and Schafer (1972), and Rhodes and Reiss (1969).

After interviewing incarcerated youths, Garfunkel (1986) noted a recurring theme of alienation and falling out with the educational system. Common repetitive elements in the theme included failure, truancy, disputes with teachers and administrators, meeting with parents, broken agreements followed by more failure. To Garfunkel, it seemed "as if delinquency, school failure, academic impairment and educational neglect are so closely intertwined as to be inseparable" (p. 159).

Education in Corrections

The fact that 79% of the incarcerated felons in New York State are school dropouts suggests that most felons are in need of education. John Nuttall (1987), director of education for the New York Department of Correctional Services, reported that of 10,250 inmates classified between October 1, 1986 and June 30, 1987, 50 percent functioned below the eighth grade level in reading and 73% functioned below the eighth grade level in mathematics.

In a survey study representing 35 states, DeGraw (1987) reported that 91% of the educators in adult correctional institutions were certified and 48 percent

had achieved Master's degrees; 71% were males; 29% were females and 70% had been teaching in a correctional setting for between one and ten years. Furthermore, 98.2% of the respondents indicated that GED certification was available at their facility, 90% offered Adult Basic Education, 88.9% had vocational education, and 68.9% offered community college programs.

Michalek (1988) believes that many inmates realize the value of education as evidenced by the fact that most prison systems have more men wanting to attend school than space allows. Michalek also noted that the primary emphasis in correctional education is basic literacy, GED acquisition, and vocational training, and that success is measured by positive personality changes, skill acquisition related to economic viability, and improved recidivism rates. Indeed, McMillin (1981) notes that it is assumed by prison authorities that basic education programs will improve the inmate's ability to hold a job and, thereby, become self-supporting.

In examining correctional education programs and their impact on recidivism, Macdonald and Bala (1983) compared a group of inmates who had completed a college program while incarcerated with a group who participated in the same, but dropped out or were terminated by the college before completion. Their findings showed that the return rate after release for those earning a degree

or certificate was considerably lower than for those who withdrew or were terminated (14% vs. 23%) and notably lower than the projected departmental return rate of 20%.

In 1986, Macdonald and Bala completed a similar study on men who acquired a GED while incarcerated and found that those earning a GED were also much less likely to return to prison. They concluded that acquisition of the high school equivalency diploma was positively related to a reduction in recidivism when compared to the prison population as a whole. The study was repeated on a larger sample in 1989 by Macdonald with similar results.

School's Role in Alleviating the Problem

Wehlage and Rutter (1985, 1986) stress that although many of the characteristics ascribed to dropouts are beyond the control of school, i.e., social and family characteristics, it is no excuse for schools to absolve themselves of their responsibility for the dropout problem. Rather, they say, schools must accept their students' backgrounds and abilities as given and create an environment in which these youths can experience success and hopes for future employment.

In a later paper, Wehlage, Rutter and Turnbaugh (1987) outline a model program to deal with at-risk high school students, implementing the concept of a school-

within-a-school design. The characteristics involved are small classroom numbers, committed teachers, students who will admit their problems and want to become active, and a curriculum that promotes individualized instruction, clear objectives, and an active role for students.

Sherraden (1986) sees the historical changes in the youth labor market as instrumental to the pattern of dropping out of school. He believes the country's education system has the responsibility to move youth to adulthood where historically it was the labor market. Sherraden sees the system failing by not preparing today's youth for future employment or even a place in society. As a result, many youth become disengaged and drop out.

Seeing employment as such a strong motivator for many dropouts, Jordan-Davis (1984) advocates that schools place a greater emphasis on vocational education to keep the potential dropout in school. Further, he recommends intervention in the early grades and improved relations with school authorities as well as increased flexibility by the school system in academic pace and individual tutorial assistance. Additionally, he proposes in-school child care facilities and a more active counseling program geared to the potential dropout.

Grossnickle (1986) stresses the need for effective and caring principals and teachers who are willing to meet the particular needs of every student. Grossnickle as well as Natriello (1985), and Natriello et al. (1985) bring attention to the current school reform movement which is calling for changes in the content of courses as well as the raising of standards. They criticize the lack of attention being devoted to the dropout issue and the potential problems that may be added to this phenomenon as a result of raising standards and demands for students already at risk.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

Selection of Subjects

The subjects consisted of a sample population of adult male felons incarcerated at New York State's Sing Sing Maximum Security Correctional Facility, located in Ossining, New York. Permission to conduct this study was granted by the New York State Department of Correctional Services, Albany, New York (Appendix A).

The inmate population at Sing Sing is approximately 2,200. The N.Y.S. Department of Correctional Services "Report," (1986) profiles its under custody population, of which Sing Sing is representative, as follows: 50% black, 22% white, 27% Hispanic and 1% other; 46.4% of the male felons are between 21-29 years of age, with 9% under age 21, and 13.4% 40 years or older; 79% lack a high school diploma, and only 4.7% of those who graduated took post-secondary studies. At time of arrest, 60% were unemployed or underemployed, i.e., were unable to find work in the discipline considered to be their customary occupation. Thirty-one percent held skilled jobs and 9% held professional positions. In 1985, 14% were committed for drug-related crimes, but

upon commitment 70% admitted being drug abusers. Most (70%) were sentenced in New York City. Thirty percent are serving time for robbery, 14% for drug-related offenses, 14% for burglary and 16% for murder or homicide.

Cell assignments for inmates at Sing Sing are made as space becomes available. There are five buildings which confine men, and each differs somewhat in living quarters and privileges. Inmates can request a cell move in the institution or request transfer to another facility in New York State. All moves must undergo a process of examination and approval. Most often they have no choice of cell location. Since Sing Sing is a reception center, inmates are frequently transferred to make room for new inmates.

To ensure a degree of randomness in the sampling, approximately 10% of the inmates in each of the facility's five buildings were sampled. Subjects were selected systematically by cell location within each building until 220 were completed. Borg and Gall (1983) suggest that in causal-comparative research, there should be a minimum of 15 cases in each group to be compared. Major groupings pertinent to this study for analysis were dropout and graduate status (there were 173 dropouts and 47 graduates) and dropout status by ethnicity (there were 85 black dropouts, 31 white dropouts and 53 Hispanic dropouts). Therefore, the

sample taken provided the necessary number for analysis in all major groupings.

Data Collection

The survey was conducted in the summer of 1989. The researcher distributed questionnaires (Appendix B) in the noon and evening periods when all inmates were stationed in their respective cells. The researcher approached each subject individually to explain the study and ask if he would like to participate. The subject was then given a minimum of one day to complete the questionnaire. On the following day, the researcher collected the questionnaire from each respondent. To provide confidentiality, each subject was given an envelope in which he could return the questionnaire. This provided confidentiality since no returned questionnaire was labeled with the inmate's name or cell location. Some respondents requested that they be given more than one day and this request was granted. A questionnaire in Spanish was also administered when it was appropriate (Appendix C).

Questionnaire

General Development

The first step in questionnaire development is to see that each question contributes to the research objectives (Borg and Gall, 1983; Converse and Presser,

1986; Dillman, 1978; Moser and Kalton, 1972). After a thorough review of the literature on dropping out, and delinquency as it related to school, an initial 110 questions were assembled to answer the objective of the study. Many of the questions were written by the researcher. Others were borrowed in total or in part from prior survey questionnaires used in the study of school dropouts (see Abram and Cobb, 1979; Kumar and Bergstrand, 1979; Smith, 1986).

Most of the questions were written in a structured, closed format using the rules and recommendations of questionnaire construction (Borg and Gall, 1983; Berdie and Anderson, 1986; Converse and Presser, 1986; Dillman, 1978; and Moser and Kalton, 1972). An "other" category as well as space for optional comments was provided where appropriate. Questions were developed using clarity, proper grammar, respondent appropriateness, freedom from ambiguity, simple words and short statements, avoidance of negative and double-question items, and the avoidance of biased or leading questions. Additionally, questions were laid out in a logical sequence so that items of interest and of a non-threatening nature were placed in the beginning and those of a personal or sensitive nature at the end as suggested by Berdie and Anderson (1986), Borg and Gall (1983), Converse and Presser (1986), and Moser and

Kalton (1972). An attempt was made to group questions of a similar content together (Dillman, 1978).

To avoid researcher and instrumentation bias, it is advised that one or more people check each question for usage as well as focus, clarity, ambiguity, wording, answer categories and overall construction (Berdie and Anderson, 1986; Converse and Presser, 1986; Dillman, 1978). To do this, the questionnaire was presented to a panel of eight judges, seven of whom had experience working with inmates in a correctional setting but having a different background from that of the researcher as recommended by Converse and Presser (1986). The panel consisted of an experienced elementary teacher who taught low grade level readers, a GED bilingual teacher, a GED English teacher, a college psychology professor, a correctional education counselor, two inmate teacher's aides who were college graduates, and a newspaper editor. The editor was the only one who did not have experience in a correctional setting.

Each judge was given the 110-item pooled questionnaire along with a list of the nine research objectives (see objectives under subsection, Subproblems) and then asked independently to sort each question by objective as well as check for question design and meaning (Appendix D). Each also had the option to change, eliminate or add new questions.

Questions retained for subsequent pilot study of the questionnaire included those items where panel agreement was $\geq$ .80. Seven new questions proposed by panel members also had to undergo the same panel review and agreement. The resulting questionnaire consisted of 93 questions.

Content Validity

Borg and Gall (1983) note that "Each item on your questionnaire must be developed to measure a specific aspect of one of your objectives" (p. 418). Nunnally (1967) comments that to ensure content validity for an instrument, there must be a "representative collection of items and 'sensible' methods of test construction" (p. 81).

The methods used for questionnaire construction and content validity are described in the previous section under General Development of the Questionnaire and were those recommended by Birdie and Anderson (1986), Borg and Gall (1983), Converse and Presser (1986), Dillman (1978) and Moser and Kalton (1972).

To further refine and improve the questionnaire, a pilot study (testing on the target population) was performed as recommended by Borg and Gall (1983), Converse and Presser (1986) and Moser and Kalton (1972). The questionnaire was presented to 25 incarcerated inmates for completion. This is considered an

appropriate number (Borg and Gall, 1983; Converse and Presser, 1986). These inmates were selected systematically based on their cell location and were considered representative of the target population. Subjects were told that the administration of the questionnaire was a practice run and that their help was needed. Subjects were then asked to complete and comment on the content of each question as they saw fit in a space provided to the right. Of these 25 subjects, 21 (84%) completed and returned their questionnaires. Converse and Presser (1986) recommend that during this pretest, the questionnaire be checked for question order and flow, the subject's interest and attention, completion time, question interpretation, and suitability. Each subject was then interviewed individually to elicit this information. It was noted that most respondents completed the questionnaire in less than one hour (an acceptable time by Converse and Presser) and that many expressed verbal satisfaction in participating in the study. It was also noted that questions posing the greatest sensitivity were those related to the subject's criminal and family background and for this reason some of these questions were revised and three were eliminated. The results of the pilot study elicited the development of six new questions bringing the total to 96 questions. A slight rearrangement of questions was made to improve question flow.

A second pilot pretest followed using this revised 96-item questionnaire on a different group of 25 subjects representative of the target population. Of these, 20 agreed to participate and complete the questionnaire (80%). Subjects were not told the questionnaire was still in a testing stage. Respondents were primarily probed for their understanding and meaning of the new and restructured questions and their overall reaction to the questionnaire. Results were positive, no new questions were added, and there was only a slight rewording of three items.

In its final form used in the study, the questionnaire was six pages and consisted of 96 questions. For a breakdown of which question addressed which objectives, refer to Appendix E or the left margin of the questionnaire (Appendix B).

Data Analysis

This study was primarily descriptive in nature. The analyses employed were consistent with the study's objectives and are reported in detail in Chapter IV.

In analyzing data for objective 1, i.e., to profile the incarcerated male's educational, vocational, and criminal histories, the number of subject responses and their percentiles was recorded. An analysis of age and grade of dropping out, grade retention, extracurricular participation, misbehavior in school, school attendance,

vocational training, drug use in school and grade status were performed using cross tabulations and chi-square statistics to determine the relationship between dropouts and non-dropouts.

In analyzing data for objective 2, i.e., to profile the incarcerated male's personal, socioeconomic background, dropouts were compared with non-dropouts. T-test statistics were used to compare the mean weekly salary of dropouts and non-dropouts at the time of their arrest. Parental upbringing, military service, gang affiliation, employment status, and parental education were also examined and compared using chi-square statistics. A breakdown of mean income before coming to prison was also performed.

In analyzing data for objective 3, i.e., to ascertain the incarcerated male's general perception of school from his elementary grades to the time of last attendance, subject responses of dropouts and graduates were compared using chi-square statistics regarding enjoyment of school and feelings of teacher trust, teacher personal interest and teacher respect. Ways the educational system met the subjects' needs and ways it could have done a better job were also analyzed.

In analyzing data for objective 4, i.e., to determine what image of self-perception characterized the incarcerated male when enrolled in school, comparisons were made between dropouts and non-dropouts.

In analyzing data for objective 5, i.e., to determine the parental and school-related support incarcerated male dropouts had prior to dropping out of school), parental and school involvement with subjects and parental involvement with the school was examined in both dropouts and graduates and compared using chi-square statistics. Also, parental reaction to subjects' dropping out was investigated.

In analyzing data for objective 6, i.e., to identify the school and/or other related factors which incarcerated male dropouts believed led to their dropping out, the number of subject responses and their percentiles were recorded. Ethnic breakdown was also performed. Examination also focused on who inmates blame for their decision to drop out and how they believed dropping out harmed them.

In analyzing data for objective 7, i.e., to ascertain how criminal dropouts view their decision to drop out and if they see their imprisonment related to their lack of high school completion, the number of subject responses and their percentiles were recorded.

In analyzing data for objective 8, i.e., to determine to what extent inmates utilize the prison's educational system and why they attend school in prison, inmate use was broken down by academic program, vocational program, and college program. Also, the percentage of dropouts that acquired a high school

equivalency diploma or earned college credits and college degrees in prison was made. Furthermore, since the amount of time a man had been incarcerated was ascertained, a ratio of time spent in prison to time participated in correctional programs was obtained. Program participation by dropout and non-dropout was also broken down by ethnicity and those having language difficulties, i.e., those requiring the questionnaire in Spanish.

In analyzing data for objective 9, i.e., to ascertain the criminal dropout's present perception of education and the future aspirations of all the inmates surveyed, frequency analysis was used and the open-ended response for their future plans (question #96) was analyzed. Some responses were recorded.

In addition to the above stated analysis, all responses to open-ended questions and optional comments were analyzed. Some typifying responses were recorded in the findings.

Based on these analyses, the objectives of the study were met and recommendations were formulated.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Return Frequency

This research project was based on information obtained from prisoners at New York State's Sing Sing Correctional Facility, located in Ossining, N.Y. Of the 251 questionnaires distributed, 220 (88%) were returned completed. This is considered a highly acceptable return rate by Borg and Gall (1983). Of these, 208 (94.5%) were completed in English (Appendix B) and 12 (5.5%) were completed in Spanish (Appendix C). Despite the fact that most of these subjects had a lower than 12th grade education, all said they had no problems completing the questionnaire. Although grammar, sentence structure and spelling were poor in many cases, all appeared capable of communicating their thoughts and feelings regarding their education and backgrounds.

Educational Histories

The first objective of this study was to profile the incarcerated male's educational, vocational and criminal history.

Of the 220 inmates surveyed, 194 (88%) attended school in the United States, 19 (9%) attended school outside the United States (generally Puerto Rico) and 6 (3%) attended school in both Puerto Rico and the United States.

As shown in Table 1, 196 (91%) attended public school during some period of their education. When comparing graduates to dropouts there was no significant difference between those having attended public school, but in a chi-square test a significantly greater proportion of graduates attended private, Catholic

Table 1

Kind of School Inmates Attended

N = 216

School:	Dropouts N	Dropouts %	Graduates N	Graduates %	Total N	Total %
Public	158	92	38	84	196	91
[a]Private	7	4	9	20	16	7
[b]Catholic	26	15	13	29	39	18
[c]Military	1	1	7	16	8	4
BOCES	7	4	5	11	12	6
Other	16	9	7	16	23	11

Note. Some subjects attended more than one school during their school career.

[a-c]Groups are significantly different.
[a](X^2=13.142, p<.0003, dF=1)
[b](X^2=4.509, p<.034, dF=1)
[c](X^2=22.387; p<.00005, dF=1)

and/or military schools during some period of their schooling. Although the sample size in each of these three latter categories was small, it is consistent with Peng (1983) who reported that Catholic schools generate a much smaller percentage of dropouts than public schools.

Of the 220 respondents studied, 173 (79%) dropped out of school and 47 (21%) graduated. The mean grade for dropping out was 9.9 (Sd = 1.5) with grades ranging from 5 to 12 (Table 2). However, the most frequent grade for dropping out was the eleventh. The mean age was 16.5 years (Sd = 1.5) and ranged from 11 to 20 (Table 3). Since youngsters who drop out generally do so at age 16 in grade 10 (Soderberg, 1988), or grade 11 (Peng, 1983), this sample was representative of dropouts in the general population regarding these variables.

Table 2

Frequency Distribution for
Grade of Dropping Out

N = 166

Grade	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
5	2	1.2	1.2
6	1	.6	1.8
7	14	8.4	10.2
8	8	4.8	15.1
9	29	17.5	32.5
10	42	25.3	57.8
11	51	30.7	88.6
12	19	11.4	100.0

Note. Seven dropouts did not report grade of dropout.

Table 3

Frequency Distribution for
Age of Dropping Out

N = 166

Age	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
11	2	1.2	1.2
12	2	1.2	2.4
13	1	.6	3.0
14	10	6.0	9.0
15	12	7.2	16.3
16	50	30.1	46.4
17	50	30.1	76.5
18	28	16.9	93.4
19	9	5.4	98.8
20	2	1.2	100.0

Note. Seven dropouts did not report age.

Analysis of the three major ethnic groups revealed that of 109 blacks, 85 (78%) dropped out, of 45 whites, 31 (69%) dropped out, and of 61 Hispanics, 53 (87%) dropped out (Table 4). Although the dropout rate was greater for blacks and Hispanics than for whites, a chi-square statistic showed the rates were not significantly different. The U.S. Department of Education has reported that the dropout rate has traditionally been higher for blacks and Hispanics than for whites with Hispanics having nearly triple the white rate (Johnson, 1989). Dropout statistics given by the U.S. Department of Education for 1978 (when most of this sample was in high school) showed the dropout rate for blacks to be

about 20%, for whites to be about 12%, and for Hispanics to be about 33% in the general population. Therefore, the dropout rate for this population far exceeds that found in the general population across all ethnic groups.

Table 4

Dropouts By Ethnicity

N = 215

N = 109 Black		N = 45 White		N = 61 Hispanic		Total	
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
85	78	31	69	53	87	169	79

Note. Three dropout subjects from "Other" category not included. One subject did not report race. No significant difference among groups. (X^2=5.04, p<.081, dF=2)

When comparing graduates to dropouts in chi-square tests, significantly fewer graduates were left back in grades, significantly fewer dropouts participated in extracurricular activities, and significantly fewer graduates transferred school districts or classes during the year (Table 5).

As Table 5 shows, dropouts were twice as likely as graduates to be held back in grades. Forty-four percent (N = 44) of the dropouts were retained one year as compared to 21% (N = 10) of the graduates, and 6% (N = 10) of the dropouts were retained two years as compared to 4% (N = 2) of the graduates (Table 6). Smith and Shepard (1987) note that nationwide between 15-19% of

Table 5

Educational Background

(Number and Percent Yes)

Background	Dropouts N	Dropouts %	Graduates N	Graduates %	Total N	Total %
N = 216 [a] Was retained in one or more grades	84	50	12	26	96	44
N = 216 [b] Participated in extracurricular activities	119	70	42	89	161	75
N = 220 [c] Transferred school districts/classes during the year	96	56	17	36	113	51

Note. [a-c] $_2$Groups are significantly different.
[a] (X^2=8.702, p<.003, dF=1)
[b] (X^2=6.956, p<.008, dF=1)
[c] (X^2=5.523, p<.02, dF=1)

all students are retained in a grade during their school years. The present study sample exceeds this estimate. This is of interest since there is accumulating evidence that students who are retained experience a greater incidence of dropping out (Grissom and Shepard, 1989; Hammack, 1986, 1989). For example, Hess (1987) found that the dropout rate of those retained prior to the ninth grade in the Chicago Public School system (where the dropout rate exceeds 40%) was 61% as compared to 37% for those students never left back. It should be noted that in the present study the most frequent grade of

retention occurred in the third (14%) and fourth (17%) grades, whereas Grissom and Shepard have reported that most retentions traditionally occur in the first grade.

When retained subjects were asked if they felt the school was right in leaving them back, 69% (N = 56) of the dropouts retained and 65% (N = 8) of the graduates retained said "yes." Byrnes (1989) has noted that retained students view such an act as the school's legitimate right, but also view the act as a punishment for their inadequate performance and they, therefore, experience shame and failure, particularly since it is a stigma in our society (Smith and Shepard, 1987).

When retained subjects in the present study were asked to describe their feelings about being held back, 62 of the 96 gave written responses. However, only six of these responses could actually be described as "feelings". Most, instead, gave reasons "why" they were retained. The most frequent of these reasons centered on poor attendance (N = 17, 30%) and misbehavior (N = 6, 11%). Examples of responses were: "I was left back for absence and poor grades" (subject dropout retained in sixth grade); "Although I was out of school for some time that year, they should have given me a test to see how I would have done and not left me back" (subject dropout retained in third grade); and "I cut school a lot so they did right" (subject dropout retained in seventh grade). Statements centering on poor grades as

a reason were given by only five (9%) subjects. It should be noted that the major explanation given by teachers for children being retained is poor academic achievement (Byrnes, 1989).

Table 6

Grades Retained

N=84

Grade of Retention	Dropout Retentions				Graduate Retentions				Total		Cum.
	First		Second		First		Second				
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	%
K											
1	4	5							4	4.2	4.2
2	5	7			2	18			7	7.3	11.5
3	10	14	1	10	2	18			13	13.5	25.5
4	15	21			1	9			16	16.7	41.7
5	6	8	1	10	1	9			8	8.3	50.0
6	9	12			2	18	1	50	12	12.5	62.5
7	8	11	3	30	1	9			12	12.5	75.0
8	4	5	1	10			1	50	6	6.3	81.3
9	6	8	4	40	2	18			12	12.5	93.8
10	3	4							3	3.1	96.9
11	2	3							2	2.1	99.0
12	1	1							1	1.0	100.0
Total	73		10		11		2		96		

Note. Ninety-six subjects reported they were retained, but 11 dropouts and one graduate did not report their grade of retention.

Breakdown of retention rates by ethnicity showed no significant difference (Table 7). Forty-two percent (N = 46) of the blacks, 42% (N = 19) of the whites and 47% (N = 27) of the Hispanics were retained one or more grades.

In the present study, 70% (N = 119) of the dropouts said they participated in extracurricular activities compared to 89% (N = 42) of the graduates (Table 5). Compared in a chi-square test a significantly greater percent of graduates participated in extracurricular activities. Dropouts listed almost exclusively sports activities, such as basketball, baseball, football, handball and track. Only three dropouts (3%) listed activities other than athletics. Graduates, who said they participated in extracurricular activities (N = 42, 89%) listed a similar array of sports involvement, but unlike the dropouts listed greater involvement in non-sports activities (N = 9, 21%), such as chess club, debating team and music. Due to the large scope of activities listed by many subjects, it is unclear if some confused general participation in a scheduled gym class with that of a voluntary extracurricular activity (Appendix B, question 24). Regardless of when the participation took place, dropouts as well as graduates, appeared to be highly involved with athletics in school. However, it should be noted that the literature regarding the effects of extracurricular activity in school is diverse and findings conflict. For example, Holland and Andre (1987) in a review of the literature report that, in general, involvement in extracurricular activities bears a positive relationship to school completion, but note that some researchers have found

that academic achievement is lower for male students whose only activity is athletics. They further note that degree of involvement, school size and socioeconomic status are all factors which can affect outcomes. Breakdown by ethnicity (Table 7), however, revealed no significant difference among races.

Dropouts often have a background of more family moves and school transfers than graduates (Brodinsky, 1989; Grossnickle, 1986; Hoover, 1989; Neill, 1979). Table 5 shows that 56% (N = 96) of the dropouts said they transferred to a different school district or changed classes during the year as compared to 36% (N = 17) of the graduates. The results were significantly different. Breakdown by ethnicity (Table 7) showed no significant difference among groups.

Although dropouts are generally academically capable (DeBlois, 1989; Fine and Rosenberg, 1983), it is estimated that between 5% and 10% of secondary school students have learning disabilities (Hahn, 1987). Learning disabilities or emotional problems can lead to dropping out (Hahn, 1987). In the present study 25% (N = 42) of the dropouts admitted to having learning or physical disabilities while in school (Table 8). Eighteen percent (N = 30) said they had physical or mental problems that affected their ability to read or concentrate and 21% said they were in a special education class. For each of these three questions the

Table 7

Educational Background By Ethnicity

Reason:	Black N	Black %	White N	White %	Hispanic N	Hispanic %	Total N	Total %
N = 211 Was retained in one or more grades	46	42	19	42	27	47	92	44
N = 205 Participated in extracurricular activities	84	78	30	68	46	77	160	76
N = 205 Transferred school districts/classes during the year	58	53	21	47	33	54	111	52

Note. No significant difference among groups on any variable.

proportion of dropouts was greater than that of graduates, though not significantly. However, the fact that such a high percentage of dropouts admitted having such disabilities or problems raises questions regarding their impact on school as well as criminality. Garfunkel, for example, has reported that almost all youthful offenders imprisoned in juvenile correctional institutions are in need of special education for maladies such as learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, and mental retardation. Bell et al. (1984) has stated that 25% of the adult inmates sampled from three state prisons had some symptoms of learning

disabilities as compared to 3% in the general population. Nuttall (1987), director of education for the Department of Corrections in New York State, has reported that 15% of the inmates entering New York State prisons score below 80 on an I.Q. screening test and that a significant percentage of inmates have some type of disability requiring specific programs and services, but admits that identification and placement is often not made.

Table 8

Educational Handicaps
(Number and Percent Yes)

Background	Dropouts		Graduates		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
N = 216 Had learning or physical disability while in school	42	25	6	13	48	22
N = 218 Had physical or mental problems that affected ability to read or concentrate	30	18	3	6	33	15
N = 216 Was in a special education class	36	21	6	13	42	19

Note. No significant difference between groups.

Breakdown by ethnicity revealed no significant difference in the rate of those having disabilities in school among groups (Table 9). This is of interest

since Hahn (1987) has reported that advocacy organizations contend that blacks are much more likely to be enrolled in classes for the learning disabled.

Table 9

Educational Handicaps
By Ethnicity

Reason:	Black		White		Hispanic		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
N = 211 Had learning or physical disability while in school	23	21	11	25	12	20	46	22
N = 211 Had physical or mental problems that affected ability to read or concentrate	15	14	6	13	10	17	31	15
N = 211 Was in a special education class	25	23	6	14	8	13	39	19

Note. No significant difference among groups on any variable.

Dropouts in this study also showed a significantly higher incidence of misbehavior (Table 10), poor attendance during their last two years of school (Table 11) and poor academic performance (Table 12) than did graduates.

It should be noted that students who misbehave in school experience a greater probability of dropping out

than those who do not ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987; Ekstrom et al., 1986).

Table 10

Number of Times Subjects Sent to the Office for Misbehavior During Last Two Years of School

(Number and Percent Yes)

N = 215

	Dropouts		Graduates		Total	
Times per year:	N	%	N	%	N	%
5 or more	28	17	1	2	29	14
3 or 4	20	12	5	11	25	12
1 or 2	62	37	14	30	76	35
Never	58	35	27	57	85	40

Note. Groups are significantly different (X^2=11.214, p<.012, dF=3)
If collapsed into the categories "one or more" and "never" results are significant.
(X^2=8.073, p<.005, dF=1)

High absenteeism has also been associated with dropping out of school (Ekstrom et al., 1986; Hess, 1987).

The most common reason for dropping out of school is poor academic performance ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987; Hahn, 1987).

When subjects were asked to give a written reason for their poor attendance, 64 dropouts responded. Of these, most responses related to a loss of interest (23%), wanting to hang out with friends (21%), or

Table 11

Attendance Last Two Years of School

N = 217

Attendance	Dropouts N	Dropouts %	Graduates N	Graduates %	Total N	Total %
Never absent	14	8	14	30	28	13
Absent occasionally	72	42	29	62	101	47
Absent frequently	28	17	4	9	32	15
Out more than in	32	19	0	0	32	15
Almost never attended	24	14	0	0	24	11

Note. When collapsing attendance groups into the categories "never absent" through "absent occasionally" and "absent frequently" through "almost never attended" groups are significantly different. (X^2=25.55, p<.00005, dF=1)

wanting to work (18%). Drug involvement was also a frequent reason given (13%). Interestingly, illness was not cited by any subject as a reason for poor attendance.

A 1980 survey done by the American Association of School Administrators indicated that the majority of schools nationwide practiced corporal punishment (Brodinsky, 1980). Investigation of corporal punishment in the present study revealed 73 (34%) subjects received physical punishment in school, and only 18% were in favor of its use in school (Table 13). There was no significant difference between dropouts and graduates.

Table 12

Subject's Self-Reported Performance
in Junior/Senior High School

N = 213

Performance	Dropouts N	Dropouts %	Graduates N	Graduates %	Total N	Total %
Excellent	9	5	5	11	14	7
Very Good	29	17	11	24	40	19
Good	60	36	21	46	81	38
Fair	43	26	8	17	51	24
Poor	16	10	1	2	17	8
Failing	10	6	0	0	10	5

Note. When collapsing performance into the categories of "Excellent through Good" and "Fair, through Failing" the results show groups are significantly different (X^2=7.35, p<.007, dF=1)

Table 13

Subjects Receiving Physical Punishment
in School and Position Toward It

Punishment Received and Position	Dropouts N	Dropouts %	Graduates N	Graduates %	Total N	Total %
N = 217 Received physical punishment in school	54	32	19	40	73	34
N = 213 In favor of physical punishment for misbehavior in school	31	18	7	15	38	17

Note. No significant difference between groups.

Those receiving physical punishment commented either being slapped or hit with a ruler or paddle for some misbehavior, such as disrupting the class or fighting. Fifty (68%) respondents gave open-ended comments. Most reflected resentment. One 32-year-old dropout commented, "A teacher hit my hands with a ruler. I wanted to kill her and still do." A 38-year-old graduate said, "I was trying to explain why I was late. I felt it was unnecessary and I lost respect for the system." Many of those not in favor of physical punishment in school stated that only the parents had the right to administer such punishment. One dropout wrote, "Two wrongs don't make a right. Besides, you get more from a kid by showing him or her that you really care." Another dropout commented, "I have kids and if some teacher hurt any of them it would be the last time." One graduate stated, "Such punishment can only hinder a child's progress." Still another graduate favoring such punishment wrote, "One time a Christian brother slapped the hell out of me, but I think I deserved it. After that you grow or you go out of the school."

It should be noted that the majority of parents nationwide favor corporal punishment as a means of punishing their children (Brodinsky, 1980). However, Kagan (1990) has stated, "Corporal punishment has been found to increase truancy and dropout rates. Students

learn to avoid punitive situations by social withdrawal, truancy, and ultimately dropping out of school" (p. 4).

Vocational Histories

In this study 74 (35%) subjects received some vocational or job training while in school. Seventy-seven (35%) received training after leaving school. Graduates showed a significantly higher frequency of vocational training in high school than dropouts (Table 14).

One approach to the dropout problem suggested by researchers as well as practiced by some schools is to offer more vocational and work-study programs (Grossnickle, 1986; Hahn, 1987; Ruby and Law, 1987; Wagner, 1984; Wehlage et al., 1987). The reasoning is

Table 14

Vocational and/or Job Training In and Out of School

Vocational Training	Dropouts N	%	Graduates N	%	Total N	%
N = 211 [a]In Junior/Senior high school	52	32	22	50	74	35
N = 219 After leaving school	58	34	19	41	77	35

Note. [a]Groups are significantly different (X^2=5.441, p<.02, dF=1)

that vocational training offers an alternative to those students who lack the ability or interest in an academic program. Moreover, many students who drop out of school do so in order to enter the work force (Hahn, 1987). For them, vocational training could provide skills of practical value and relevance (Wagner, 1984).

Criminal Histories

Table 15 reports that 100 (46%) subjects admitted taking drugs in school and 70 (32%) were arrested while still attending school. In written responses, marijuana was the most frequently cited drug used in school (87%).

There was no significant difference in drug use or arrest rates while in school between dropouts and graduates.

When analyzing drug use at time of arrest, 96 (44%) admitted use. Drug use is something many men in prison

Table 15

Criminal Activity While in School
(Number and Percent Yes)

Activity	Dropouts		Graduates		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
N = 218 Took drugs in school	80	47	20	43	100	46
N = 219 Arrested while in school	60	35	10	21	70	32

Note. No significant difference between groups.

have taken part in ("Report to the Nation," 1988). It is also associated with juvenile criminality as well as dropping out (Dunham and Alpert, 1987).

In determining the length of time subjects were out of school before their first arrest, times were recorded to the nearest whole year. For the sake of simplicity, any length of time under one year was recorded as zero years. Results showed the range to be from zero to 37 years with a mean of 4.4 years (Sd = 5.8). The distribution was highly skewed (+2.359). Inspection was made for outliers. "An outlier is a research subject whose scores differ remarkably from the general pattern established by other subjects in the sample" (Borg and Gall, 1983, p. 391). Borg and Gall note that unless the sample is large, even one or two outliers can distort the results obtained by conventional statistics. The Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS) treats subject values with more than three standard deviations (Sd > 3) as outliers (Norusis, 1987). In a normal distribution, more than 99% of the case values fall within three standard deviations. Therefore, to correct for large skewness, subject values greater than three standard deviations were eliminated before analysis. Six subjects whose time ranged from 22 to 37 years were eliminated (Sd > 3) before comparing group means. After this adjustment, the mean for graduates (N = 41) was 5.7 years (Sd = 5.1) and for dropouts (N = 141) was 3.1

years (Sd = 3.8). Therefore, the dropouts tended to be imprisoned about two-and-a-half years earlier than the graduates upon leaving school. Compared in a t-test, these group means were significantly different (t = 3.5, p<.001, dF=53.56). It is known that criminal offenders are most often males and that one-half of all arrests are of people under age 21 ("Report to the Nation," 1988).

For determining the length of time subjects had been incarcerated, all times were rounded off to the nearest whole year. For the sake of simplicity, all times less than one year were recorded as one year. Results showed a range of 1 to 29 years. The mean was 7 years (Sd = 5.2). The distribution was skewed (+1.379). Four subjects whose time ranged from 23 to 30 years (Sd > 3) were eliminated and group means were compared. After this adjustment the mean was 6.6 years (Sd = 4.6). The mean for graduates (N = 41) was 5.8 years (Sd = 4.1). The mean for dropouts (N = 157) was 6.9 years (Sd = 4.7). Although group means were not significantly different (t=1.31, p<.191, dF=196), incarceration time was about one year longer, on average, for dropouts.

Innes (1988) has reported that more than 80% of the U.S. prison population are recidivists. Of the 220 subjects in the present study, 200 indicated the number of times they had been imprisoned. The range was from one to 40 times. The mean was 3.1 times (Sd = 4.4).

Inspection revealed a highly skewed distribution (+4.995). For this reason 4 subjects whose values ranged from 22 to 40 times (Sd > 3) were eliminated before comparing group means. After this adjustment the mean was 2.6 times (Sd = 2.4). The mean for graduates (N = 46) was 2.0 times (Sd = 1.5). For dropouts (N = 150) the mean was 2.8 times (Sd = 2.6). Compared in a t-test, group means were significantly different ($t = 2.02$, $p<.045$, $dF = 131.69$). This suggested that the recidivism rate is greater for dropouts than graduates.

Personal and Socioeconomic Background

The second objective of this study was to profile the incarcerated male's personal and socioeconomic background.

Table 16 reports the personal background of inmates sampled. Subjects ranged in age from 19 to 66 years. The mean age was 32.9 years (Sd = 8.8). There was no significant difference in mean ages between dropouts and graduates.

One-hundred-nine (50%) respondents were black, 45 (21%) were white and 61 (28%) were Hispanic. These findings are in agreement with New York State Department of Correction's statistics. As evidenced by these statistics, prison populations are disproportionately black and Hispanic. School dropouts are also

disproportionately black and Hispanic (Ekstrom et al., 1986; Ruby and Law, 1987; Rumberger, 1983).

The primary language spoken (Table 16) was English (75%), followed by Spanish (12%), English and Spanish (10%) and English and a foreign language other than Spanish (2%).

Of 219 respondents, 102 (47%) were single, 30 (14%) were common law, 47 (22%) were married, 21 (10%) were divorced, 16 (7%) were separated and 3 (1%) were widowed (Table 16). The BJS reports similar statistics for inmates nationwide.

One hundred-fourteen (52%) subjects were brought up by only one parent, or, in some cases, with another relative or non-relative (Table 16). There was no significant difference between graduates and dropouts. The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) has reported that 48% of the inmates nationwide grew up in a single-parent home. Therefore, the present findings are consistent with the BJS findings. They also suggest that family instability is quite prevalent among inmates. Children from single-parent families are more likely to exhibit behavioral problems such as high absenteeism, misbehavior in school and poor study habits at home (Brodinsky, 1989) as well as drop out (Hahn, 1987). When family stability was analyzed by ethnic background, 56% of the blacks, 36% of the whites and 51% of the Hispanics said they were not reared by both natural

Table 16

Personal Background of Inmates Sampled

Personal Data:		Dropouts N	Dropouts %	Graduates N	Graduates %	Total N	Total %
N = 219							
Age:	18-24	33	19	4	8	37	17
	25-29	44	26	12	26	56	26
	30-34	36	21	8	17	44	20
	35-39	28	16	12	26	40	18
	40-44	17	10	7	15	24	11
	Over 45	14	8	4	8	18	8
N = 218							
	Black	85	49	24	52	109	50
Ethnic	White	31	18	14	30	45	21
Back-	Hispanic	53	31	8	17	61	28
ground	Other	3	2	0	0	3	1
N = 220							
Primary	English	127	73	38	81	165	75
Lang-	Eng & Span	17	10	5	11	22	10
uage	Eng &Other	2	1	2	4	4	2
Spoken	Spanish	26	15	1	2	27	12
	Other	1	1	1	2	2	1
N = 219							
	Single	82	47	20	44	102	47
	Common law	26	15	4	9	30	14
Marital	Married	33	19	14	30	47	22
Status	Divorced	17	10	4	9	21	10
	Separated	13	8	3	7	16	7
	Widowed	2	1	1	2	3	1
N = 217							
Brought up by both natural parents		77	45	26	57	103	48
N = 217							
[a]Served in Military		23	14	18	39	41	19

Note. [a]Groups are significantly different (X^2=15.60, p<.0001, dF=1)

parents. Although results were not significant among groups (X^2=4.82, p<.09, dF=2), blacks and Hispanics did have a greater percentage of family instability. Brodinsky (1989) has reported that 57% of the blacks and over one-third of the Hispanics in the United States live with either one parent or some other arrangement, while only 21% of the whites have such an arrangement ("One in Every Five," 1989). Therefore, the black inmates in this sample are somewhat representative of that found in the general population for family arrangements, but whites and Hispanics in this sample show higher instability. This is particularly evident when one considers that when many of these subjects were reared, family stability was even greater. For example, in 1960, only 9% of the whites and 33% of the blacks had an arrangement other than two natural parents ("One in Every Five," 1989).

Forty-one (19%) respondents served in the military (Table 16). When comparing graduates to dropouts a significantly greater proportion of graduates served in the military. This is interesting since dropouts have often been attracted to military service as an alternative to high school (Hahn, 1987). However, it should be noted that recently the army changed its requirements for enlistment and will only accept candidates with a regular high school diploma or 15 college credits in lieu of a high school diploma

(Sergeant Elmy, personal communication, February 16, 1990). Elmy notes that this poses a problem for dropouts looking toward the military as an alternative to high school or other employment.

The socioeconomic background of inmates sampled is reported in Table 17. One-hundred-eighty-four (84%) subjects said they lived in an urban setting; 30 (14%) reported to have lived in the country and 14 (6%) reported to have lived in the suburbs.

It is known that poor urban settings generate the highest rate of dropouts (Hahn, 1987).

Eighty-five (39%) subjects reported having belonged to a gang as a teenager (Table 17). When comparing dropouts to graduates there was no significant difference in gang affiliation. Gang membership often leads to conflict with school and dropping out (Hess, 1987). It also leads to criminal activity.

Immediately after leaving school (Table 17), 105 (48%) respondents found jobs, 12 (6%) went to college, 58 (27%) hung out and 43 (20%) did other (generally enlisted in the military or were arrested). Understandably, only graduates went to college. While 26% of the graduates went to college immediately after leaving school, 33% of the dropouts "hung out," meaning their rate of unemployment was quite high and considerably higher than that of the graduates.

Unemployment is typically much higher for dropouts than for graduates ("School Dropouts," 1986).

Table 17

Socioeconomic Background of Inmates

Socioeconomic Data:		Dropouts N	%	Graduates N	%	Total N	%
*N = 219 Neighborhood Setting	City	145	84	39	83	184	84
	Country	23	13	7	15	30	14
	Suburbs	9	5	5	11	14	6
N = 219 Past Gang Affiliation		72	42	13	28	85	39
N = 218 Status right after leaving school	Job	83	48	22	48	105	48
	College	0	0	12	26	12	6
	Hang-out	56	33	2	4	58	27
	Other	33	19	10	22	43	20
N = 218 Subject received welfare at some time		33	19	8	17	41	19
N = 218 [a]Employed at time of arrest		88	52	35	71	123	56
N = 215 Parents or Guardians once on welfare		50	30	8	18	58	27
N = 204 [b]Some brothers or sisters dropped out		93	58	17	39	110	54

Note. [a]Groups are significantly different (X^2=4.635, p<.03, dF=1)

[b]Significantly different (X^2=5.275, p<.022, dF=1)

*Some subjects reported living in more than one setting.

Table 17 (Continued)

Socioeconomic Background of Inmates Sampled

Socioeconomic Data:	Dropouts N	%	Graduates N	%	Total N	%
N = 213						
Immediate family members served time in prison	48	29	9	20	57	27
N = 205						
Father's Education						
Dropped out	35	22	9	20	44	22
Graduated	34	21	17	38	51	25
College Degree	6	4	7	16	13	6
Wasn't known	85	53	12	27	97	47
N = 206						
Mother's Education						
Dropped out	38	24	9	20	47	23
Graduated	48	30	15	34	63	31
College degree	13	8	10	23	23	11
Wasn't known	63	39	10	23	73	35

Forty-one (19%) respondents admitted receiving welfare at some time (Table 17). There was no significant difference between dropouts and graduates. The BJS has reported that 22% of inmates depended on welfare, unemployment benefits or social security before coming to prison ("Report to the Nation," 1988).

One-hundred-twenty-three (56%) respondents said they were employed at the time of their arrest (Table 17). A significantly greater proportion of graduates were employed than dropouts (71% vs. 52%). The BJS reports that 55% of the inmates nationwide were employed at the time of their arrest, but does not break this

statistic down by graduates and dropouts. The BJS also notes that most repeat offenders commit crimes during periods of high unemployment. This is of interest since graduates are generally much more likely to be employed than dropouts ("School Dropouts," 1986).

When examining the families of inmates, findings showed that 58 (27%) of the respondents' parents or guardians received welfare (Table 17). There was no significant difference between dropouts and graduates. It is known that dropouts often come from families of lower socioeconomic status (Ekstrom et al., 1986; Fine and Rosenberg, 1983; Rumberger, 1987; Stern, 1987). Hahn (1987) has reported that the probability of a dropout's family being on welfare is three times that of a graduate.

One-hundred-ten (54%) subjects reported they had at least one brother or sister who dropped out of school (Table 17). There was a significantly greater frequency of sibling dropouts in the dropout group than the graduate group. This supports other research findings which show that dropouts more than graduates are usually more likely to have siblings who are also dropouts, e.g., "Dealing with Dropouts," (1987).

Fifty-seven (27%) subjects had at least one immediate member (parent, guardian, brother, sister) serve time in prison (Table 17). There was no significant difference between dropouts and graduates.

The BJS has reported that nationwide, in 1983, 34% of the inmates had an immediate family member who served time in prison. Therefore, these findings support BJS findings. It also suggests that criminality may have a familial pattern.

When parental education was examined, approximately 20% of the dropouts as well as about 20% of the graduates said their mothers and/or fathers dropped out of school (Table 17). However, this finding may not be accurate since 53% of the dropouts and 27% of the graduates did not know what grade their father completed and 39% of the dropouts and 23% of the graduates did not know what grade their mother completed. It is known, however, that a higher rate of parental dropping out is generally found in the families of dropouts ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987). Ramsey (1986) in studying a correctional facility in South Carolina discovered that 75% of the inmates had parents who were dropouts.

The number of children per family ranged from one to 19. The mean number of children per family was 5.5 (Sd = 2.8). Inspection revealed a skewed distribution (+1.143). Three outliers whose values ranged from 14 to 19 children (Sd > 3) were eliminated before group means were compared. After this adjustment, the mean for graduates (N = 43) was 5.3 children (Sd = 2.8) per family. The mean for dropouts (N = 165) was 5.4 children (Sd = 2.5). Compared in a t-test, results

showed no significant difference between group means (t=.21, p<.835, dF=60.05). Data in the Statistical Abstract of the U.S. (1989) indicate that only 3.2% of the families have a family size of six persons, and only 2.4% of the family households have a family size consisting of 5 children. In the present sample, approximately 60% of the subjects came from families having 5 or more children. Rumberger (1983) has reported that larger family size is associated with increased levels of dropping out, particularly in whites.

Table 18 shows the last occupation of subjects broken down by dropout and graduate. Graduates held a greater proportion of professional, clerical and self-employed jobs. Graduates also experienced greater employment.

Nine percent of the dropouts indicated they were never employed and seven dropouts, not included in Table 18, said their full-time occupation involved illegal activities, such as dealing in drugs and burglary. The General Accounting Office has reported in "School Dropouts" (1986) that dropouts experience triple the unemployment of their graduate counterparts and are more likely to be working in semi-skilled manual jobs.

When examining the length of time subjects worked in their last job, 147 responded. The range was from 1 to 264 months (22 years). The mean was 35 months

Table 18

Last Occupation of Inmates
By Classification

Occupational Classification N = 198	Dropouts N	Dropouts %	Graduates N	Graduates %	Total N	Total %
Professional, Technical or Managerial	5	3	7	16	12	6
Clerical	11	7	5	11	16	8
Sales	7	5	2	4	9	5
Service	31	20	14	31	45	23
Machine Trades	16	11	4	9	20	10
Structural (includes construction)	42	28	7	16	49	25
Self-employed	3	2	5	11	8	4
Other	24	16	1	2	25	13
Never employed	14	9	0	0	14	7

(Sd = 42). Inspection revealed a highly skewed distribution (+2.718). For this reason, three subjects whose values ranged from 168 to 264 months (14 to 22 years) (Sd > 3) were eliminated before comparing group means. After this adjustment the mean was 30 months (Sd = 29). Breakdown by groups revealed the mean for graduates (N = 37) to be 37 months (Sd = 29). For dropouts (N = 107), the mean was 27 months (Sd = 29). Although results were not significant when compared in a

t-test, graduates worked almost one year longer on average in their last job (t=1.81, p<.073, dF=63.16).

One-hundred-sixty subjects reported their weekly salary before coming to prison. Subjects reporting illegal monies or who were unemployed were not included in the analysis. Salary ranged from $79 to $3,800. The mean was $380 (Sd = 401). Inspection revealed a highly skewed distribution (+5.947). For this reason two subjects whose weekly salaries were $3,000 and $3,800 (Sd > 3) were eliminated, and group means were compared. After this adjustment the mean was $342 (Sd = 208). The mean for graduates was $398 (Sd = 262). The mean for dropouts was $327 (Sd = 188). Compared in a t-test, results showed no significant difference between group means (t=1.72, p<.087, dF=44.42). The General Accounting Office has reported that dropouts generally show lower incomes than graduates. Although this is also the case here, these salaries were not significantly different.

Perception of School

The third objective of this study was to ascertain the incarcerated male's general perception of school from his elementary grades to the time of last attendance.

Table 19 reports subjects' perception of their elementary and secondary school. As shown, more

graduates enjoyed elementary school than dropouts did (81% vs. 73%) and more graduates enjoyed secondary school as well (81% vs. 62%). It is believed that general enjoyment of school is important to the learning process (Dunham and Alpert, 1987; Wehlage and Rutter, 1985).

Table 19

Subjects' Perception of
Elementary and Secondary Schools

	N = 218 Elementary						N = 214 Secondary					
Perception of School	Dropout		Grad.		Total		Dropout		Grad.		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Enjoyed it	124	73	38	81	162	74	103	62	38	81	141	66
Didn't enjoy it	17	10	2	4	19	9	29	17	5	11	34	16
Hated it	9	5	2	4	11	5	11	7	1	2	12	6
Don't know	21	12	5	11	26	12	24	14	3	6	27	13

Open-ended comments regarding what or why subjects enjoyed elementary school were given by 136 (62%) subjects (72% of the graduates and 59% of the dropouts). Of these, 93% of the respondents who enjoyed elementary school said they did so because of either the open concern their teachers showed toward them, the learning that took place, and/or the milieu that existed for

having and making new friends. Typifying responses were, "Enjoyed how the teachers performed their duties in trying to educate us" and "Enjoyed my friends and activities."

Written responses regarding enjoyment of secondary school were given by 140 (64%) subjects (60% of the graduates and 65% of the dropouts). Of these 93% of the positive responses centered around being with friends, meeting girls, and classroom learning. Negative open-ended comments were few, but generally complained about classroom confinement or their use of drugs which made them lose interest.

Table 20 reports subjects' perception of their elementary and secondary teachers. Results showed that at the elementary level a high percent of dropouts and graduates felt they could trust their teachers (81% vs. 77%). However, a significantly lesser percentage of dropouts felt they could trust their secondary teachers as compared to graduates (58% vs. 80%). Furthermore, at both the elementary and secondary level, dropouts were significantly less likely than graduates to believe that their teachers took a personal interest in teaching them (67% vs. 89% and 41% vs. 65% respectively). Dropouts were also significantly less likely to share any personal problems or concerns with their secondary teachers (39% vs. 64%). It is believed that an important ingredient to a successful school experience

Table 20

Subjects' Perception of Elementary and Secondary Teachers

(Number and Percent Yes)

	Elementary						Secondary					
Perception of Teachers	Dropout		Grad.		Total		Dropout		Grad.		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
N = 210							N = 205					
Trusted them	135	81	34	77	169	81	[a]93	58	36	80	129	63
N = 213							N = 215					
Took interest in teaching	[b]112	67	41	89	153	72	[c]69	41	30	65	99	46
Could share personal problems/ concerns							[d]63	39	29	64	92	44

Note. [a-d], Groups are significantly different.
[a](X^2=7.204, p<.007, dF=1)
[b](X^2=8.678, p<.003, dF=1)
[c](X^2=8.657, p<.003, dF=1)
[d](X^2=9.315, p<.002, dF=1)

is for students to feel their teachers are personally interested in their learning and welfare (Brodinsky, 1989; Tidwell, 1988; Wehlage and Rutter, 1985, 1986). This is particularly important to the learning process in the elementary grades where the student first learns to read and write and where his capabilities are first established (Hess, 1987). Unfortunately, dropouts commonly complain that their teachers weren't interested in them (Wehlage and Rutter, 1985, 1986).

Open-ended comments of those subjects believing their elementary teachers did take a personal interest in them were given by 75 (34%) subjects (28% of the graduates and 34% of the dropouts). Of those believing they did, 90% of the responses revolved around their teachers providing some sense of caring or extra help. A typifying comment by a graduate was, "They made sure we had an understanding of what was being taught." One dropout wrote, "Sometimes if I needed a little extra help, they would help me."

Open-ended comments regarding personal interest given by secondary teachers were given by 50 (23%) subjects (26% of the graduates and 22% of the dropouts). As with elementary school, those believing their secondary teachers took a personal interest generally commented on teachers caring about their progress and helping them. Subjects feeling they did not receive personal interest on both the elementary and secondary levels generally blamed large class size or their teachers' aloofness. One dropout commenting about his elementary school teachers wrote, "They only cared about themselves." Another dropout commenting about his secondary school teachers, "They were just in and out for the paycheck. There were just too many of us for one teacher."

Those subjects believing they could share personal problems with their high school teachers generally

restricted their confidence to school-related problems. One typifying open-ended comment by a dropout was, "They could help me with learning problems, but not home problems."

Subjects not believing they could share personal problems generally commented that their problems were unrelated to what their teachers had to offer. One such comment by a dropout was, "I felt they were there to teach and not deal with my problems." Another dropout wrote, "They could not do anything for me concerning home problems, financial problems, etc."

Table 21 reports how the subjects graded their elementary and secondary teachers. As shown, 199 (92%)

Table 21

Grade Given Elementary and Secondary Teachers By Subjects

	N = 210 Elementary						N = 216 [a] Secondary					
	Dropout		Grad.		Total		Dropout		Grad.		Total	
Grade	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	66	39	21	47	87	40	43	26	19	42	62	30
B	67	39	18	40	85	39	54	33	15	33	69	33
C	24	14	3	7	27	13	38	23	9	20	47	22
D	9	5	2	4	11	5	17	10	1	2	18	9
F	5	3	1	2	6	3	13	8	1	2	14	7

Note. [a]When collapsing categories "A and B" and "C to F" groups are significantly different for secondary teachers only (X^2=4.236, p<.04, dF=1)

subjects gave their elementary teachers an A, B, or C grade. One-hundred-seventy-eight (85%) gave their secondary teachers an A, B, or C grade. However, a significantly greater percentage of dropouts gave their secondary teachers a C to F grade.

Most subjects giving their secondary teachers a grade of A, gave reasons such as, "dedication," "personal interest," and "because they put out a lot of time and effort." Subjects giving their teachers low grades cited just the reverse.

Table 22 reports subjects' general perception of teachers' respect and fairness in grading. As shown, approximately equal percentages of dropouts and graduates felt their teachers respected them (71% vs. 77%), but significantly less dropouts felt they were graded fairly for their efforts (78% vs. 96%). Brodinsky (1989) notes it is important that students feel respected by their teachers for a successful school experience (Brodinsky, 1989).

Ways in which subjects believed the educational system met their needs is reported in Table 23. As shown, the need most respondents felt met was "the teaching of reading and writing" given by 189 (86%) subjects. Second was "a place I could meet and make friends" given by 126 (57%) subjects. When comparing dropouts to graduates, a significantly lower proportion of dropouts felt courses developed their talents and

abilities or that school prepared them for the future, or taught them how to behave.

Table 22

General Perceptions of School
(Number and Percent Yes)

General Perceptions	Dropouts N	Dropouts %	Graduates N	Graduates %	Total N	Total %
N = 202 Felt respected by most teachers	118	71	36	79	154	73
N = 209 Felt graded fairly for efforts in school[a]	127	78	44	96	171	82

Note. [a]Groups are significantly different (X^2=7.588, p<.006, dF=1)

Ways in which subjects believed the educational system could have done a better job are reported in Table 24. As shown, the most frequent response was "emphasized vocational training" given by 96 (44%) respondents. The second most frequent was "better developed my talents and abilities" given by 95 (43%) respondents. The next was "made courses more practical" given by 80 (36%) respondents. When comparing dropouts to graduates, a significantly smaller proportion of dropouts felt that the system should have made courses more difficult, meaning things were probably difficult enough for them.

Table 23

Ways Educational System
Met Needs

N = 220

Ways System Met Needs	Dropouts N	Dropouts %	Graduates N	Graduates %	Total N	Total %
Taught me to read and write	150	87	39	83	189	86
[a]Courses developed my talents and abilities	71	41	34	72	105	48
Was a place I could meet and make friends	94	54	32	68	126	57
[b]Prepared me for the future	68	39	27	57	95	43
[c]Taught me how to behave	46	27	20	43	66	30
Other	68	39	27	57	95	43
Did not meet my needs in any way	6	4	1	2	7	3

Note. Some subjects reported more than one way school system met their needs.

[a-c]Groups are significantly different.
[a](X^2=14.513, p<.0001, dF=1)
[b](X^2=4.957, p<.026, dF=1)
[c](X^2=4.485, p<.034, dF=1)

When subjects were asked to record their high school's greatest problem, 183 (83%) subjects responded. Replies were diverse, but the most frequent problem cited was "drugs," given by 14% of the subjects.

Table 24

Ways Educational System Could Have Done a Better Job

N = 220

Ways system could have done a better job:	Dropouts N	%	Graduates N	%	Total N	%
Maintained stricter rules and orders	40	23	15	32	55	25
Made courses more practical	66	38	14	30	80	36
[a]Made course work more difficult	18	10	10	21	28	13
Made course work less difficult	25	15	2	4	27	12
Better developed my talents/abilities	77	45	18	38	95	43
Emphasized vocational training	81	47	15	32	96	44
Helped me find a job	35	20	10	21	45	21
Was fine as it was	27	16	7	15	34	16
Other	26	15	8	17	34	16

Note. Some subjects reported more than one response.

[a]Groups are significantly different (X^2=3.933, $p < .047$, dF=1)

Image of Self-Perception

The fourth objective of this study was to determine what image of self-perception characterized the incarcerated male when enrolled in school.

About two-fifths of the dropouts said they did not care or cared only little what their teachers thought of them (Table 25). Slightly fewer graduates felt this way. This is of interest, since according to Hirschi (1969) and social control theory, it is when the individual no longer values the institution of school nor cares about what teachers think of him, that he is more likely to commit a delinquent act.

Table 25

Did You Care About What Your Teachers Thought of You As a Person

N = 216

Response	Dropouts N	Dropouts %	Graduates N	Graduates %	Total N	Total %
Yes	106	62	32	71	138	64
No	32	19	2	4	34	16
Not very much	33	19	11	24	44	20

Note. No significant difference between groups. (X^2=5.535, p<.063, dF=2)

When subjects were asked if they felt they fit in and were considered just as important as the other students in secondary school, 145 (69%) subjects said "yes," (Table 26). However, 65 (31%) responded "no". There was no significant difference between dropouts and graduates. According to the frustration-self-esteem model explaining school dropout, non-completers often

suffer from a poor self-image as a result of school failure. However, Ekstrom et al. (1986) and Wehlage and Rutter (1986) when analyzing High School and Beyond data found no significant difference between dropouts and graduates on questions related to positive attitudes for themselves or questions of self-worth. In the present study only 37 (17%) subjects wrote open-ended responses to this question. One dropout commented, "Yes, I felt just like any other student." One graduate said, "Yes, I am a leader and I had many friends." Still another dropout, "No, because of my drug dealing." The U.S. Department of Education has stated that youth who are reared in stressful, hostile, or indifferent environments tend to have a poor self-image and do not fulfill their learning potential ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987). That many, if not most, subjects were reared in such an environment may help explain why 31%

Table 26

Did You Feel You Fit In and Were Considered Just As Important As the Other Students in Your Junior or Senior High School

N = 210

Response	Dropouts N	%	Graduates N	%	Total N	%
Yes	109	67	36	78	145	69

Note. No significant difference between groups. (X^2=2.339, p<.126, dF=1)

of the subjects felt they didn't fit in or were as important as their peers.

When the question of self-image was examined by ethnicity (Table 27), results showed no significant difference among ethnic groups.

Table 27

Did You Feel You Fit In and Were Considered Just As Important As the Other Students in Your Junior or Senior High School By Ethnicity

N = 210

	Black		White		Hispanic		Total	
Response	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	75	70	31	76	37	65	143	70

Note. No significant difference among groups. (X^2=1.306, p<.521, dF=2)

When subjects were asked what grade they would have given themselves overall, significantly more dropouts gave themselves a "C through F" grade (Table 28). These grades are reflective of the self-reported junior/senior high school performance given by subjects in Table 12. One-hundred-six (50%) subjects gave open-ended comments justifying the grade they gave themselves. Almost all responses centered on performance. One graduate, grading himself with a "B" wrote, "Because I always tried my best." One dropout (B grade) said, "Because I attended all classes and made a good effort." Another

dropout (F grade) commented, "Because I wasn't concerned about anything the school had to offer and I did nothing in class."

Table 28

School Grade Subjects Would Have Given Themselves Overall

N = 212

Grade	Dropouts N	Dropouts %	Graduates N	Graduates %	Total N	Total %
A	17	10	5	11	22	11
B	65	39	27	60	92	43
C	66	40	11	24	77	36
D	8	5	1	2	9	4
F	11	7	1	2	12	6

Note. When collapsing grade into the categories of "A-B" and "C-F" results show groups are significantly different (X^2=6.908, p<.009, dF=1)

Parental and School-Related Support

The fifth objective of this study was to determine parental and school-related support incarcerated male dropouts had prior to dropping out of school. It is generally agreed among researchers that parents who take an interest in their children's school success will fare better than those whose parents do not (Amundson, 1989; Brodinsky, 1989). However, many dropouts have parents who are dropouts themselves (Brodinsky, 1989; Gadwa and

Griggs, 1985; Neill, 1979) and generally communication between their parents and school is poor (Grossnickle, 1986). In the present study, almost all subjects said their parents took a personal interest in them although slightly more graduates felt so (see Table 29). About three-quarters of both groups said their parents were called to the school (generally for misbehavior problems). And, of these, almost all said their parents answered this call by actually going. However, only three-fifths of the subjects in both the dropout and

Table 29

Parent/Guardian Involvement with Subject and School

(Number and Percent Yes)

Involvement	Dropouts N	Dropouts %	Graduates N	Graduates %	Total N	Total %
N = 218 [a]Took a personal interest in you	150	87	44	98	194	89
N = 218 Were called to the school	125	73	35	75	160	73
N = 156 Came to the school when called	119	98	35	100	154	99
N = 216 Took part in school decisions or events	102	60	32	68	134	62

[a]Groups are significantly different. (X^2=4.469, p<.035, dF=1)

graduate groups said their parents participated in a school decision or went to such events as Open House, PTA meetings, school plays or concerts. This suggested that parental support was somewhat low.

The number of times subjects had contact with a school counselor in their last two years of school is reported in Table 30. Eighty-four (50%) of the dropouts said they never had contact with a counselor as compared to 10 (21%) of the graduates. Ironically, students at risk are generally in added need of counseling ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987).

Table 30

Number of Times Inmates Had Contact With a School Counselor in Last Two Years of School

N = 214

Times per Year	Dropouts N	Dropouts %	Graduates N	Graduates %	Total N	Total %
5 or more	18	11	9	19	27	11
3 or 4	24	14	10	21	34	16
2	24	14	13	28	37	17
1	17	10	5	11	22	10
Never	84	50	10	21	94	44

Note. Groups are significantly different. (X^2=13.92, p<.008, dF=4)

When collapsing categories to "one or more" and "never" groups are significantly different. (X^2=12.056, p<.0005, dF=1)

When dropouts were asked how their parents or guardians reacted to their decision to drop out, the most frequent response was "They were angry," given by 93 (56%) dropouts (Table 31). The second most frequent response was "They encouraged me to stay in school," given by 73 (44%).

Table 31

Parents/Guardians Reaction to Subjects' Dropping Out

N = 165

Reaction	N	%
Didn't care	11	7
Accepted it	32	19
They were happy	1	1
They were sad	70	42
They were angry	93	56
Encouraged me to stay	73	44
Other Reaction	19	12

Note. Some subjects reported more than one reaction.

Table 32 reports those who discussed alternatives to dropping out with dropouts. The most frequent response was "no one" given by 76 (47%) subjects, followed by "parent or guardian" given by 61 (37%). School counselors were indicated by 26 (16%)

Table 32

Those Who Discussed Alternatives to Dropping Out With Dropouts

N = 163

Party	N	%
No one	76	47
Parent/Guardian	61	37
Friend	29	18
Teacher(s)	30	18
Counselor	26	16
Principal	14	9
Other	13	8

Note. Some subjects reported more than one party.

respondents. Many authorities have indicated that dropouts lack adequate counseling (Brodinsky, 1989; Hess, 1987), and DeBlois (1989) has stated that most dropouts do not consult with any adult at their school before dropping out.

Reasons for Dropping Out

The sixth objective of this study was to identify the school and/or other related factors which incarcerated male dropouts believed led to their dropping out.

Reasons given by dropouts in this study for dropping out of school are listed in Table 33.

Table 33

Reasons Given by Inmates for Dropping Out of School

Reason:	N=85 (78%) Black N	%	N=31 (69%) White N	%	N=53 (87%) Hispanic N	%	N=169 Total N	%
Was expelled or suspended	18	22	3	10	12	23	34	20
Had poor grades	17	21	6	20	11	21	35	21
[a]Was on drugs	11	13	6	20	16	31	35	21
Bored with courses	28	34	12	40	12	23	54	32
Waste of time	12	15	9	30	7	14	31	18
Couldn't get along with teachers	7	8	5	17	5	10	17	10
Couldn't get along with other students	5	6	1	3	3	6	6	6
Teachers not interested in my welfare	13	16	5	17	7	14	26	15
Couldn't keep up with school work	15	18	7	23	9	17	32	19
Wanted to work full time	21	25	13	43	20	39	55	33
Had to support family	16	19	5	17	9	17	30	18
Was getting married or was married	1	1	1	1	0	0	2	1
Girlfriend was pregnant	12	15	2	7	6	12	22	13
Had a problem with the language	1	1	0	0	3	6	4	2
Illness	2	2	0	0	0	0	4	2
Was arrested	10	12	6	20	3	6	19	11
Other	11	13	4	13	10	19	26	15

Note. Some subjects reported more than one response. Four dropouts did not report reasons.

[a]Groups are significantly different ($X^2=6.31$, $p<.05$ $dF=2$)

The most frequent response was "wanted to work full time" given by 55 (33%) subjects. The second most frequent was "bored with courses" given by 54 (32%) subjects. Other reasons given were: "was on drugs" by 35 (21%) subjects, "poor grades" by 35 (21%), "was expelled or suspended" by 34 (20%), "couldn't keep up with school work" by 32 (19%), and "had to support family" by 30 (18%). Thirty-one (18%) subjects indicated that school was a waste of time, and 26 (15%) subjects indicated teachers were not interested in their welfare. Twenty-two (13%) subjects said they dropped out because their girlfriend was pregnant and 19 (11%) because they were arrested.

Other studies have also revealed that the most common reason cited by dropouts for leaving school involve overall dislike of school, poor academic performance and/or wanting to work (Ekstrom et al., 1986; Hahn, 1987; Kumar and Bergstrand, 1979; Peng, 1983; Tidwell, 1988).

When analyzed by ethnicity, results showed a significant difference among races regarding drug use as a reason for dropping out, with Hispanics the highest (31%).

Table 34 reports the grades dropouts said they had at the time of dropping out. As indicated in the table, 63 (38%) said they were performing below average or failing. This is in agreement with self-reported

performance in Table 12 if we consider a self-reported grade of "fair" to be equivalent to "below average" as this question poses. As Table 12 shows, 42% of the dropouts said they were performing between "fair to failing".

Table 34

Dropouts' Grades at Time of Dropping Out

N = 166

	N	%
High	15	9
Average	88	53
Below Average	44	27
Not Passing	19	11

When dropouts were asked if most of their good friends also quit school, 80 (50%) said they did. This supports the findings of other studies which have found that dropouts often had friends who were dropouts, e.g., Alpert and Dunham (1986), Dunham and Alpert (1987), Kumar and Bergstrand (1979).

When dropouts were asked who they blamed for their decision to drop out, 132 (79%) said they blamed themselves (Table 35). Only 34 (20%) blamed the school system in general.

Table 35

Who Inmate Dropouts Blame for
Their Decision to Drop Out

N = 167

Party blamed:	N	%
School system in general	34	20
The principal	7	4
Some of your teachers	15	9
Your friends	17	10
Your enemies	4	2
Yourself	132	79
No one	18	11

Note. Some subjects blamed more than one party.

Decision to Drop Out in Retrospect

The seventh objective of this study was to ascertain how criminal dropouts view their decision to drop out and if they see their imprisonment related to their lack of high school completion.

When dropouts were asked in what way did they feel dropping out harmed them, the most frequent response was "kept me from getting a good job," given by 84 (50%) subjects (Table 36). The second most frequent response was "gave me more time to hang out and get in trouble" given by 78 (47%) subjects, followed by "Ended formal learning" given by 73 (44%) subjects, and "Made me feel less important" given by 53 (32%) subjects.

Table 36

Ways Inmate Dropouts Believe Dropping Out Harmed Them

N = 167

Ways It Harmed Them	N	%
Kept from getting a good job	84	50
Ended formal learning	73	44
Gave more time to hang out and get in trouble	78	47
Separated from friends	18	11
Made feel less important	53	32
Other	25	15

Note. Some subjects reported more than one way.

Jordan-Davis (1984), who studied dropouts shortly after they left school, reported that half the dropout subjects cited employment as the primary advantage to leaving school early. Table 37 reports how criminal dropouts viewed their decision to drop out in this study. When asked if they believed at the time they dropped out that education was necessary for their future success, 91 (56%) subjects said yes. As with Jordan-Davis's findings, most open-ended comments to this question revolved around employment opportunities. Some comments by dropouts were: "Yes, but I couldn't maintain both school and work," "Yes, in fact, I knew I

Table 37

How Criminal Dropouts View Their Decision to Drop Out

N = 162-163

Dropout Questions	Response	N	%
At time of dropping out believed education was necessary for future success	Yes	91	56
	No	72	44
Regret dropping out today	Yes	135	83
	No	28	17
If could do it over, would have stayed in school	Yes	147	91
	No	11	7
	Not sure	4	3
Think dropping out resulted in some way to committing a crime	Yes	73	46
	No	84	53
	Not sure	2	1
If completed high school, would probably be in prison today any way	Yes	51	32
	No	83	51
	Not sure	28	17

needed a high school diploma to get a good job," and "No, I thought a job was all anyone needed." However, when these dropouts were asked if they regretted dropping out today, 135 (83%) dropouts said they did regret it. Similar to findings in this study, Peng (1983) reported that about 50% of the dropouts he studied felt dropping out was a mistake shortly after leaving school.

When asked, if they could do it over, would they have stayed in school, 147 (91%) dropouts said they

would have. Many commented that they would have tried much harder given another chance.

Seventy-three (46%) dropouts believed that dropping out resulted in some way in their committing a crime, and 83 (51%) believed that had they completed high school, they would probably not be in prison today.

Enrollment in Prison's Educational System

The eighth objective of this study was to determine to what extent inmates utilize the prison's educational system and why they attend school in prison.

All subjects were aware that the correctional system offers some form of schooling. Table 38 reports inmate enrollment in the academic, vocational and college programs.

As shown, of the 220 subjects sampled, 183 (83%) voluntarily participated in one or more of these programs at some time during their incarceration (not necessarily at Sing Sing). The data showed that a significantly greater proportion of dropouts than graduates attended the academic school (60% vs. 21%), which is understandable since the academic school's curriculum is primarily for high school non-completers. The data also showed that a significantly greater proportion of graduates attended the college program (62% vs. 30%). There was no significant difference in

Table 38

Inmate Enrollment in Prison's Programs

N = 220

Program	Dropouts N	Dropouts %	Graduates N	Graduates %	Total N	Total %
Prison School:	147	85	36	77	183	83
*[a]Academic	104	60	10	21	114	52
Vocational	89	51	20	43	109	50
[b]College	52	30	29	62	81	37

Note. Some inmates reported enrollment in more than one program.
[a]Groups are significantly different. (X^2=22.33, p<.00005, dF=1)
[b]Groups are significantly different. (X^2=15.91, p<.0001, dF=1)
*Academic school curriculum is primarily for high school non-completers.

the percentages of dropouts and graduates enrolled in vocational school (51% and 43% respectively).

When program participation was examined by ethnicity (Table 39), results showed no significant difference among ethnic groups in any program.

Of the 173 dropouts surveyed, 103 (60%) had acquired a GED diploma (Table 40). Eighty-nine (86%) acquired their diploma while incarcerated. Breakdown by ethnicity showed that 66% of the black dropouts, 61% of the white dropouts and 51% of the Hispanic dropouts had acquired a GED diploma (Table 41).

Of the 27 college degrees acquired in prison, 16 were earned by dropouts (Table 42). State statistics indicate there has been a yearly increase in GED diploma and college degrees awarded to inmates ("Academic Report," 1989).

Table 39

Inmate Enrollment in Prison's Programs By Ethnicity

N = 215

Program	Black		White		Hispanic		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Prison School:	92	84	36	80	51	84	179	83
Academic	62	57	19	42	30	49	111	52
Vocational	59	54	19	42	31	51	109	51
College	46	42	17	38	17	28	80	37

Note. Some subjects reported enrollment in more than one program. There is no significant difference among groups in any program.

Analysis showed that the range of college credits of those having earned some credits in prison (N = 65) was from six to 150 credits. The mean for dropouts (N = 40) was 48 credits (Sd = 41). The mean for graduates (N = 25) was 45 credits (Sd = 32). There was no significant difference between means ($t=.38$, $p<.708$, $dF=59.70$).

The length of time inmates were enrolled in prison schools ranged from zero, for those never enrolled, to 96 months. The mean was 14.8 months (Sd = 17.8).

Table 40

Source From Which Dropouts
Earned a GED Diploma

N = 103

Source	N	Percent
Street	9	9
Prison	89	86
Military	4	4
Other	1	1

Note. Of the 173 dropouts surveyed, 103 (60%) have acquired a GED diploma.

Table 41

GED Acquisition By Ethnicity

N = 169

N = 85 Black		N = 31 White		N = 53 Hispanic		N = 169 Total	
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
56	66	19	61	27	51	102	60

Note. No significant difference among groups. Three dropout subjects from "other" category not included.

Results showed no significant difference in the means of dropouts and graduates ($t=.14$, $p<.89$, $dF=87.01$).

In comparing the mean time enrolled in prison school programs to the mean time incarcerated, results showed a ratio of 15 months to 81 months. Therefore,

the average inmate had spent approximately 19% of his incarcerated time enrolled in an academic or vocational program.

Table 42

College Degrees Held by Inmates

N = 217

College Degree Earned	Dropouts N	Graduates N	Total N	%
Associates	[a]8	[b]8	16	7
Bachelors	[c]7	[d]7	14	6
Masters	1	4	[e]5	2
Doctorate	0	1	1	1
None	154	27	181	83

Note. [a]All earned in prison college system.
[b]Five earned in prison college system.
[c]Six earned in prison college system.
[d]Three earned in prison college system.
[e]All 5 earned in prison college system. (All 5 Masters Degrees were awarded by New York Theological Seminary Program. Three of the four high school graduates had Bachelors' Degrees prior to entering prison.)

Table 43 shows inmates' attitude toward prison school. When subjects who attended school in prison were asked if they felt prison school helped them, 159 (91%) said yes. Typifying open-ended comments were: "It has given me challenge, direction, and purpose;" "It has made me realize that I can make it in society," and "Now I can read, write and do mathematics."

When subjects were asked if they felt going to school in prison made or will make a difference in their life, 151 (85%) said yes. Typifying comments were: "It has showed me there is an alternative;" "I now have my GED and the doors are now open;" "It gave me the chance to get the education that I passed up before," and "With an education, I can now find a good paying job." It is often assumed by prison authorities that increased literacy through participation and basic education programs offered in prisons will improve an inmate's ability to hold a job and become self-supporting (McMillin, 1981).

When subjects were asked to grade prison teachers, 165 (100%) gave the teachers a passing grade with 147

Table 43

Attitude Toward Prison School

(Number and Percent Yes)

Attitude	Dropouts N	Dropouts %	Graduates N	Graduates %	Total N	Total %
N=175 Feel prison school has helped them	128	91	31	89	159	91
N=178 Feel it has made or will make a difference in their lives	121	85	30	83	151	85

Note. No significant difference between groups.

(89%) a grade of A, B, or C (Table 44). Typifying open-ended comments were: "They are trying to help you;" "They show concern," and "It's not easy trying to teach people in prison." DeGraw (1987) in an extensive survey of correctional educators reported prison teachers as being conscientious as well as very qualified in terms of education and experience.

Table 44

Grade Given to Prison Teachers

N = 165

Grade	Dropouts		Graduates		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	53	41	9	26	62	38
B	35	27	14	40	49	30
C	29	22	7	20	36	22
D	13	10	5	14	18	11
F	0	0	0	0	0	0

Note. Groups not significantly different even when grade is collapsed into categories "A through C" and "D through F." (X^2=.521, p<.470, dF=1)

The reasons inmates attend school in prison are reported in Table 45. As shown, the most frequent response was "to better myself" given by 139 (76%) subjects. The second most frequent was "to take the GED" given by 115 (63%) subjects, followed by "to get a better job when released" given by 102 (56%) subjects.

Table 45

Reasons Inmates Attend School in Prison

N = 182

Reasons:	Dropouts N	Dropouts %	Graduates N	Graduates %	Total N	Total %
To take the GED	115	79	0	0	115	63
To better myself	115	79	24	67	139	76
To get a better job when released	87	60	15	42	102	56
[a]To enroll in college	72	50	11	31	83	46
[b]To enroll in vocational school	49	34	6	17	55	30
To impress the parole board	46	32	9	25	55	30
Other	19	13	10	27	29	16

Note. Some subjects reported more than one response.
[a-b]Groups are significantly different.
[a](X^2=4.097, $p < .043$, dF=1).
[b](X^2=3.909, $p < .048$, dF=1).

"To enroll in college" was indicated by 83 (46%) subjects and "to impress the parole board" by 55 (30%) subjects.

Present Perception of Education

The ninth objective of this study was to ascertain the criminal dropout's present perception of education and to ascertain the future aspirations of all subjects surveyed.

The reading regimen of subjects was examined to see how men spent their free time. Findings showed that 195 (89%) read a minimum of one hour daily (Table 46).

Table 46

Daily Reading Regimen of Subjects in Prison

N = 218

Frequency	Dropouts N	Dropouts %	Graduates N	Graduates %	Total N	Total %
3 to 5 hours	49	29	13	28	62	28
2 to 3 hours	66	38	17	37	83	38
1 hour	35	20	15	33	50	23
less than 1 hour	20	12	1	2	21	10
Never	2	1	0	0	2	1

Note. When collapsing the variables into the categories of "more than one hour" and "less than one hour" groups are significantly different (X^2=4.335, p<.037, dF=1)

However, a significantly greater proportion of graduates read a minimum of one hour per day. Avid reading while in prison could possibly be connected to improved reading skills which are needed to pass the GED examination.

When subject dropouts were asked if they believed that in today's world, education was important to one's future success, 156 (90%) said "yes" and 10 (6%) said "not sure" or "depends." Only six (4%) said "no."

Open-ended comments generally connected education to job success.

Of 63 dropouts not having a GED diploma, 56 (88%) said they planned on getting one in the future.

When subjects were asked what their plans for the future were, 217 (98%) subjects responded. Almost all (95%) responses centered on staying out of trouble, attaining a job and/or making a better life for themselves and their families and continuing college. For those single, getting married and having a family was mentioned. Typifying comments were, "Work, take care of my family and stay out of trouble," and "To obtain my college degree, form a stable relationship, and hopefully raise a family. Absolutely stay out of prison."

Request for Spanish Questionnaire

The New York State Department of Corrections lists its under custody Hispanic population in Sing Sing at 30%. For this reason, the researcher felt it was necessary to develop a questionnaire in Spanish to be used for those having language difficulties. The random sample in this study consisted of 61 (28%) Hispanic. Of these, only 12 subjects (5%) requested the questionnaire in Spanish, and of these, only two (1%) subjects could not communicate verbally to some degree in English. No other language difficulties were encountered. This

suggested that most Hispanics feel competent enough to read a questionnaire in English and that the vast majority can communicate in English.

Examination of the 12 subjects requesting the Spanish questionnaire revealed that 10 attended school exclusively outside of the United States, one in Puerto Rico and New York City, and one only in New York City. Eleven were dropouts. Six were or had been enrolled in the prison's school system. One subject had acquired 15 college credits. All six felt the prison school had helped them.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Researchers have ascribed numerous characteristics to school dropouts to distinguish them from graduates. Many of the characteristics that identify dropouts also characterize criminals. This makes sense since such a high percentage of dropouts are found in prison.

In the present study, 79% of the prison inmates randomly sampled were found to be school dropouts which was in exact agreement with findings reported by the New York State Department of Corrections ("Report," 1986).

This study confirmed that criminals who were dropouts do possess many of those characteristics often ascribed to dropouts in the general population, but also discovered that within a population of criminals there are both distinct differences as well as similarities in those who have dropped out and those who have graduated from high school.

School and Dropping Out

In the present study, school-related characteristics of dropouts found to be significantly greater when compared to graduates were: being held back in grades,

nonparticipation in extracurricular activities, transfer of school districts or classes during the year, misbehavior in school, high absenteeism and poor academic performance. All of the above factors have been associated with dropping out in non-criminal research studies ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987; Ekstrom, et al., 1986; Wehlage and Rutter, 1985, 1986). Therefore, in prison as in the general population, dropouts when compared to graduates have some distinctly different educational background characteristics.

One of the most prevalent and strongest predictors for dropping out is misbehavior in school (Dunham and Alpert, 1987; Wehlage and Rutter, 1986), particularly among males (Ekstrom et al., 1986). Consistent with these findings the present study also found greater misbehavior in school for dropouts than graduates. It has been suggested that misbehavior in the classroom may result in lower grades (Phillips and Kelly, 1979). This appears logical, especially if the student is sent to the office and misses valuable classroom time as a result, not to mention raising the ire of the teachers involved. In the present study, grade performance of dropouts was significantly lower than that of graduates and their higher rate of misbehavior may have been a factor. However, more than a cause of poor grades, perhaps misbehavior indicated that these students were suffering from a maladjustment to the classroom setting.

Thus, what is more important to understand than the result of the misbehavior is its cause so prevention can be effected.

It has been reported that being held back in school increases the propensity to drop out (Grissom and Shepard, 1989; Hammack, 1986; Hess, 1987; Natriello et al., 1985; Sikes and Hildebrand, 1986). Hess (1987) has found that the dropout rate of those retained prior to the ninth grade in the Chicago Public School system (where the dropout rate exceeds 40%) was 61% vs. 37% for those never left back. In the present study, a similar ratio of retained dropouts to retained graduates (50% vs. 26%) was found. About 80% of these retentions took place before ninth grade and 60% took place prior to seventh (see Table 6). Also, there was little difference in retention rates between ethnic groups. Forty-two percent of the blacks, 42% of the whites and 47% of the Hispanics were retained one or more times. What is interesting is that the majority of those retained felt the school was just in leaving them back (67% of the graduates and 69% of the dropouts). Many felt this way because they said their attendance or behavior was unsatisfactory. Very likely, their poor attendance resulted in poor academic performance which in turn resulted in grade retention. However, only a few subjects listed poor grades as a reason for their being held back. Perhaps they did not want to admit

their retention was the result of more failure in their lives.

Relevant to the present study, Nuttall (1987) has reported that 50% of the inmates entering New York State's prisons function below the eighth grade reading level and 69% attended school until at least the ninth grade. Based on Nuttall's findings, clearly a good percentage of inmates surveyed in the present study were reading well below the grade level they completed since the mean grade of dropping out was 9.9 and 21% of the sample had at least a twelfth grade education. Yet 44% of the subjects in this study were retained one or more times. If students who are retained are still reading below the grade level they completed, one can only question the positive effects of grade retention. Therefore, it is unclear how grade retention benefited these subjects. What is clear is that those retained were overage for their grade and their retention signaled failure on their part. Unfortunately, failure is one factor that may lead to dropping out, since failure is something that all students are desperately trying to avoid (Grossnickle, 1986). Grissom and Shepard (1989) have stated that retention may even have a greater effect on dropping out than poor achievement. Interestingly, in the present study, the most frequent reason given by dropouts for leaving school was their wanting to work full time. Grissom and Shepard (1989)

state "If ... jobs represent the taking on of adult roles then it is plausible to say that students who are a year too old for their grade may find it more and more difficult to postpone their leaving school" (p. 59). Hahn (1987) concurs by saying, "Students hate being too old for the class" (p. 259).

According to the participation-identification model that explains dropping out of school, students who participate in classroom or other school activities learn to identify with the school. Such identification makes failure and delinquency less likely. Although this study did not cover extensively subjects' participation in school, it did find that the vast majority of both dropouts and graduates participated in athletic events (graduates significantly more). If such participation does promote attachment, perhaps it was not great enough to overcome adverse influencing factors for those students who became dropouts.

It has been suggested by the U.S. Department of Education ("Dealing with Dropouts", 1987) that poor attendance could be an indication that a student will have future academic problems or that the school, in general, is not meeting the needs of the student. Perhaps this was the case for many of the subjects in this study, since the most frequent explanation given by subjects explaining their high absenteeism revolved around wanting to hang out with friends or having a loss

of interest. Surprisingly, illness was not given as a reason by any subject for frequent absenteeism. It stands to reason, if a student's needs are not being met or if he does not see the relevance of what he is doing in school, there is little reason for him to spend a full day sitting in a chair. He will be inclined to skip class or school entirely and seek out an environment that is more appealing or rewarding.

Students who drop out invariably complain that their teachers were not interested in their welfare ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987; Tidwell, 1988; Wehlage and Rutter, 1985, 1986; Wehlage et al., 1987). That a positive as well as personal student-teacher relationship is important to students' enjoyment of school is self-evident. In the present study, only 62% of the dropouts said they enjoyed secondary school as compared to 81% of the graduates (see Table 19). However, even in elementary school a lesser percentage of dropouts enjoyed school (73% vs. 81%). This indicates that an optimum student-teacher relationship was lacking for about one-quarter of the dropouts early in their school career. This could have been partly responsible for some dropping out later in their schooling. After all, a significantly lower percentage of dropouts felt their elementary teachers took a personal interest in teaching them when compared to graduates (67% vs. 89%, see Table 20). Also, a

significantly lower percentage of dropouts felt they could trust their secondary teachers (58% vs. 80%) or felt that their secondary teachers took a personal interest in teaching them (41% vs. 65%). Furthermore, a significantly lower percentage of dropouts felt they could share their personal problems or concerns with their secondary teachers (39% vs. 64%), and 18% of the dropouts gave their secondary teachers a D or F grade overall, as compared to 4% of the graduates (see Table 21).

Wehlage et al. (1987) have noted that potential dropouts generally have a low expectation of good grades or good schooling. However, low grades could lead to resentment or frustration. In the present study, a significantly greater percentage of dropouts than graduates felt they were not graded fairly for their efforts in school (22% vs. 4%, see Table 22). These dropouts may have resented this injustice, whether it was real or imagined. Logically, if a student feels he is not being treated or graded fairly by his teachers, he will develop a negative attitude toward teachers and possibly school. In this study, it appeared the negative feelings of the dropouts tended to grow worse as they progressed from elementary to secondary school. This lack of positive feelings may help account for their poorer academic performance, worse behavior, and poorer attendance. This in turn may have also led to

higher rates of grade retention and dropping out.

When asked in what ways the educational system could have done a better job, the most frequent response given by both dropouts and graduates was "Emphasized vocational training," and "Better developed my talents and abilities" (see Table 24). Considering the high unemployment and low incomes most subjects have experienced, this appeared to be a sensible appeal. Interestingly, "Helping to find a job," was not nearly as important to subjects as having the educational system develop their talents and skills to perform a job. Since a significantly greater percentage of graduates than dropouts had vocational training, perhaps this training acted as an incentive for these graduates to have stayed in school by providing an alternative to the academic track as well as providing a successful school environment. Finn (1989) notes that a successful classroom environment promotes identity with the school which in turn can prevent dropping out.

Thirty-six percent of subjects said they did not care or cared only little what their teachers thought of them as people (see Table 25). There was no significant difference between graduates and dropouts, although a greater percentage of dropouts felt this way. It may be argued that normally every student should care what his teachers think of him. According to Hirschi (1969) and social control theory, it is when the individual no

longer values the institution of school nor cares about what teachers think of him, that he is more likely to commit a delinquent act. That such a high percentage of convicted felons in the present sample displayed a lack of concern regarding their teachers' feelings about them may lend some support for social control theory.

The U.S. Department of Education has reported that "youth who grow up in stressful, indifferent, or hostile environments are more apt to become insecure, anxious about learning and distrustful of adults" ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987, p. 16). This agency further stated that such youth have a poor self-image as well as low self-confidence and do not fulfill their learning potential. Based on the socioeconomic backgrounds of most subjects in the present study, it could be argued that most subjects did grow up in stressful, indifferent, or hostile environments. Being reared in such a milieu may help explain why 31% of the subjects said they did not feel they fit in or were considered just as important as other students in their secondary school (see Table 26). Although this feeling of poor self-image was greater for dropouts than graduates (33% vs. 22%), the groups were not significantly different. It could be argued that this rate is relatively high and, therefore, potential criminals, whether dropout or graduates, had a poor self-image and did not feel they were part of the school group. Perhaps having a low self-image is another

reason why two-fifths of the subjects turned to the gang setting. Belonging to a gang may be where many sought out acceptance and a feeling of self-importance. Additionally, since school was also a source of frustration and failure for many in this sample, Cohen's (1955) view (strain theory) that lower class youth would turn to delinquency and the gang setting as an expression of resentment as well as an attempt to regain lost self-esteem bears some credence.

It has been reported that unemployment for dropout youths, ages 16 to 24, is twice that of graduates ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987). Yet, many studies have revealed that one of the primary reasons males leave school is to seek out employment (Jordan-Davis, 1984; Kumar and Bergstrand, 1979; Peng, 1983; Tidwell, 1988; Wagner, 1984). Money from employment is generally cited as the greatest advantage by dropouts for leaving school (Ekstrom et al., 1986; Jordan-Davis, 1984), and employment is particularly attractive to students having trouble in school (Hahn, 1987). In the present study one-third of the dropouts said one reason they dropped out was they wanted to work full time (see Table 34). This was also the most frequent response. Working while still attending school was also a frequent excuse given by subjects to explain their high absenteeism. It stands to reason that if a student is missing school due to employment or is not completing homework assignments

due to hours on the job, he is very likely to experience frustration and trouble in school. Borro (cited in Mann, 1986) has reported that working more than 14 hours per week while attending school increases the propensity to drop out. It has also been suggested that a disadvantaged family background may force some students to drop out of school in order to go to work (Natriello, 1985). Based on family backgrounds and open-ended comments, a number of subjects needed to work. Ironically, almost 50% of the dropouts were unemployed at the time of their arrest, and, even when employed, wages were relatively low.

One of the most frequent school-related reasons given by dropouts for leaving school before completion is they found school boring (Tidwell, 1988). In the present investigation, the second most frequent reason given for dropping out of school overall was "Bored with courses." Being bored and losing interest in school was also the most frequent open-ended response explaining excessive absences. Being bored in school combined with their poor employment history, may explain why the three most frequent responses given by dropouts in ways the educational system could have done a better job (Table 24) was "Made courses more practical," "Better developed my talents and abilities," and "Emphasized vocational training."

Demonstrating responsibility for their decision to

drop out, 80% of the dropouts blamed themselves and 11% blamed no one (see Table 35).

School and Criminal Involvement

Although the criminal/education nexus is complex, certain facts are clear. One fact is that nationwide, the majority of inmates are school dropouts and in New York State prisons, dropouts comprise about 80% of its population which is well above that found in the general population.

In this study, 33% of the dropouts were unemployed and just "hung out" immediately after school as compared to 4% of the graduates (see Table 17). These findings suggest that graduates, in general, are more occupied and have less idle time than dropouts after leaving school. Dropouts, on the average, were also found to be arrested more than two years earlier than graduates (a significant difference when measured in months) after their departure from school. This suggests that graduates, on average, tend to get in trouble with the law at an older age than dropouts. It can be surmised that school not only provides youth direction, but also helps occupy their time especially since dropouts often find themselves unemployed immediately or shortly after leaving school. Perhaps their idle time following dropping out increases their propensity for trouble with the law. It follows that if youth are positively

occupied and kept off the streets, less crime will probably occur. After all, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 42% of all persons arrested for crimes in 1985 were under age 20 and almost 80% were males ("Report to the Nation," 1988). Interestingly, in the present study, the recidivism rate was significantly higher for dropouts than for graduates, with graduates having a mean of two incarcerations compared to 2.8 incarcerations for dropouts. Perhaps this is because in this sample dropouts started their criminal career sooner than graduates.

Fifty-one percent of the subjects surveyed felt that had they remained in school they would not be in prison today, and an additional 17% said they might not be in prison. It is troublesome that such a large percent of criminals should view their incarceration as related or possibly related to a lack of education. The most frequent response given by dropouts when asked, "In what way did dropping out harm you?" was "Kept me from getting a good job" (see Table 36). This demonstrates that dropouts are well aware of their plight in terms of employment and low incomes. The second most frequent response, "Gave me more time to hang out and get in trouble," very likely demonstrates how they see their idleness after dropping out having led to conflict with the law and their present circumstances.

The average age of the subjects who were dropouts

in this study was 32 years. Therefore, most of these subjects had been out of school about 16 years. Most probably time, experience, and maturity have changed the opinions of many dropouts regarding school and education. For example, only 56% of the dropouts said they thought education was necessary for their future success at the time they dropped out, whereas 90% said they believed so now (see Table 37). Furthermore, 83% of the dropouts regretted their decision today and 91% said they would have stayed in school if given a second chance.

Parental and School Support

In the present study, 55% of the dropouts were not reared by both parents as compared to 43% of the graduates. Research findings show that students not living with both parents are twice as likely to drop out of school as compared to those students who are (Natriello, 1985). Furthermore, the 1966 Coleman Report documented that family stability and parental support are important to a child's success in school.

In the present study, almost all subjects felt their guardians took a personal interest in them (98% of graduates and 87% of dropouts). However, the researcher suspects that even if parental problems prevailed, it may have been difficult for subjects to admit or believe that their parent(s) were not

interested in them. Perhaps these subjects were confused as to what constituted appropriate parental interest. For example, parental participation in school events, such as open house, PTA, or school plays or concerts appeared relatively low with only 62% of the subjects claiming their parents ever participated (60% for dropouts and 68% for graduates). It could be argued that every student should have a guardian participate at least occasionally in a school event. This indicated that the parental-school link was relatively weak for many. The fact that many of the parents were themselves school dropouts may have increased alienation with the school since such parents may have found it difficult to relate to the importance of school and school success. What is unfortunate is often a parent's negative perception of school formulates the child's perception (Ruby and Law, 1983). Ruby and Law (1987) note, "Parents are usually the models for children and, therefore, play a crucial role in developing their child's attitude towards school" (p. 12).

Summoning of parents to the school for problems such as misbehavior and fights appeared to be quite prevalent in this sample with 73% of the parents or guardians being called (see Table 29). Interestingly, 99% of the subjects said their guardians went to the school. Apparently guardian concern regarding misbehavior in school was high.

Parental concern regarding subjects' decision to drop out was also evident. Almost one-half of the dropouts said their guardians were either sad or angry regarding their decision to drop out, and encouraged them to stay (see Table 31). The remaining dropouts said their guardians accepted their decision or they had some other reaction. Only 7% of the dropouts said their guardians didn't care. However, these dropouts obviously ignored any plea to change their decision, signifying they practiced independence in their decision making.

The U.S. Department of Education has noted that students at risk need more support and counseling than is generally available ("Dealing with Dropouts," 1987). Yet, in the present study 50% of the dropouts had no contact with a school counselor in their last two years of school (see Table 30). Only 16% of the dropouts said a counselor discussed alternatives to their dropping out. Why such a low percentage of dropouts had contact with a school counselor is not known. Perhaps there were many factors. Hess (1987) for example, has noted that the student-counselor ratio is 1 to 400 in some Chicago schools.

School in Prison

Eighty-three percent of the prison population sampled had been or was presently enrolled in the New

York State Department of Corrections academic or vocational program or one of the college programs which holds classes within the facilities (see Table 38). Participation, in general, was mutual for dropouts and graduates as well as all ethnic groups. However, participation by dropouts was primarily in the academic school program, whereas participation for graduates was primarily in the college program.

Of the 173 dropouts studied, 103 (60%) had acquired a GED diploma and of these 89 (86%) acquired their degree in prison. Breakdown by ethnicity showed that 66% of the black dropouts, 61% of the white dropouts and 51% of the Hispanic dropouts had acquired a GED diploma (see Table 41). Therefore, GED acquisition for dropouts in each ethnic group was mutual, although somewhat lower for Hispanics. Language difficulties may have been partly responsible for their lower GED acquisition. Indeed, language difficulties may have also attributed to their higher dropout rate (87% of the Hispanics were dropouts). It has been reported that language minority students, such as Hispanics, generally have higher dropout rates (Hammack, 1986; Ruby and Law, 1987).

Records kept by the New York State Department of Corrections reveal that for the nine-year period, 1980-1988, 39,555 GED tests were administered to inmates in prisons state-wide and 24,827 (63%) inmates passed the examination to receive a high school equivalency diploma

("Academic Report," 1989). Records also reveal that as the prison population has increased over this period, so has the number of prisoners taking this exam. For example, in 1980, 2,985 inmates were tested and in 1988, 5,156 inmates were tested.

In the present study, popularity of the college program was evidenced by the findings that 30% of the dropouts and 62% of the graduates are, or have been, enrolled in the program, and that in the present sample of 220 subjects, 27 had acquired one or more college degrees in prison (see Table 42). All but one of the 16 dropouts acquired their degrees in prison. Statistics maintained by the New York State Department of Corrections reveal that over the nine-year period, 1980-1988, 2,777 Associate Degrees, 704 Bachelor Degrees and 70 Masters Degrees were awarded. As with the GED diplomas, the trend, in general, has been a yearly increase in the number of college degrees awarded.

Pendleton (1988) believes that inmates earning a college degree look at the world more positively as well as set higher standards and goals for themselves. He claims these inmates also learn to manage their time better. Indeed, over the past 18 years, I have also personally observed prisoners, in general, using time constructively whether enrolled in school or not. Many men in prison are engaged in either reading or writing during their noon-day and evening lock-in periods. In

this study, 90% of the subjects said they read a minimum of one-hour per day (see Table 46), suggesting that many inmates are probably reading more than they did prior to incarceration. This increased reading regimen most probably results in self-improved reading levels. Self-improvement through reading, in addition to attending school in prison, may account for the high percent of dropouts passing the GED exam, which is largely a test based on reading ability.

Macdonald and Bala (1983, 1986) found that acquisition of a college degree or GED diploma resulted in a reduction in recidivism when compared to the prison population in general. A more recent study by Macdonald (1989) had similar findings. Blackburn (1981) has reported that inmates who participated in a college program while incarcerated had a 38% lower rate of recidivism than a comparably matched group of non-college participants. Exactly why these inmates were more successful after release is not clear. However, based on open-ended comments in the present study, inmates who attend school in prison tend to have a favorable attitude towards school and, in general, believed their advancement in education would benefit them, especially in terms of future employment. As mentioned earlier, gainful employment is something that appeared to weigh heavily on the minds of many inmates.

Perhaps GED graduates do encounter better employment upon release.

Although academic education is probably a priority for most inmates when they first enter prison, since they are in dire need of reading, writing and math improvement, many choose to enroll in vocational school as well. Enrollment in vocational school may coincide with enrollment in one of the academic programs. In the present study, 50% of the subjects were or had been enrolled in a vocational school. That inmates are in need of vocational training has been reported by Hassell (1988) and Zumpetta (1988). Research also indicates that inmates receiving vocational training have a lower rate of recidivism (Hassell, 1988).

All men enrolled in prison programs gave prison teachers a passing grade on performance (see Table 44). It was clear from open-ended comments that most were very appreciative of teachers in prison as well as school in prison and that education was important to many of them. Also, since the average age of the sample was about 33 years, it may be assumed that many subjects were mentally more mature than when they last attended school as youth. This researcher believes this maturity was evident in many of the open-ended comments and in the primary reasons given for going to school which were "To better myself" (76%), "To take the GED" (63%), and "To get a better job" (56%, see Table 45). "To impress

the parole board" was given by only 30% of the subjects. Kiser (1987) and Pendleton (1988) have also commented on the noticeable maturity levels and positive attitudes found in many inmates attending school in prison.

Through analysis of open-ended comments it was clear that many subjects considered school in prison their second chance in life to become educated and/or acquire a high school diploma, college degree or vocational trade. It has also been reported that inmates receiving educational instruction in prison gain in self-esteem (Roundtree, Edwards and Dawson, 1982). It is therefore probable that attendance in the prison school program has very positive outcomes.

Criminal Involvement

Why some people become criminals and others do not is beyond the scope of the present investigation. However, some variables common to this sample and to the dropouts in particular may hold clues as to why this sample had a greater likelihood of committing a felony than a sample drawn from the general population.

This sample, which was primarily black and Hispanic, was of low socioeconomic status. Most were also school dropouts. Breakdown by dropout status within the sample revealed that the percent of dropouts within each ethnic group, including white, was roughly the same (78% of blacks, 87% of Hispanics and 69% of

whites). Not only are these dropout rates much higher than that found in the general population, they are high across all ethnic groups. This suggests that regardless of ethnic makeup, criminals are apt to be dropouts.

All ethnic groups, regardless of high school completion status, had a higher rate of disabilities (see Table 9) than found in the general population. Other studies have also found that disabilities among inmates are unusually high, e.g., Bell et al. (1984), Garfunkel (1986), Nuttall (1987).

It has been reported by the National Longitudinal Surveys of Labor Market Experience (cited in "School Dropouts," 1986) that dropouts between the ages of 18 and 22 years experience an unemployment rate about three times that of graduates. In the present study, idle time before incarceration was a characteristic shared by many dropouts. While 26% of the graduates went to college immediately after leaving school, 33% of the dropouts "hung out," meaning their rate of unemployment was quite high. Nine percent of the dropouts indicated they were never employed. Thus, unemployment difficulties as well as idle time, may have lead to increased criminal activity for dropouts and this may help explain why such a high percent of dropouts are found in prison as well as why there was an earlier onset of crime by dropouts in this sample.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics ("Report to the Nation," 1988) has reported that most repeat offenders do not have regular employment and it is usually during periods of unemployment that crimes are committed. The Bureau has also reported that nationwide, 45% of the inmates incarcerated were not working at the time of their arrest. In the present study it was found that 48% of the dropouts were unemployed at the time of their arrest as compared to 29% of the graduates while seven (3%) subjects, all dropouts, chose to work full time in illegal activities. This high unemployment of both dropouts and graduates may help explain why 63% of this sample were recidivists.

The U.S. Department of Labor reported (cited in "School Dropouts," 1986) that dropouts not only earn less than graduates, but also have less desirable jobs. Analysis in the present study, indicated a considerably smaller percentage of dropouts were employed in professional, technical, managerial or clerical jobs. Also, dropouts worked for a shorter period of time on their last job before arrest (27 months versus 37 months), suggesting that dropouts were not as stable in their employment as graduates. However, although a greater percentage of graduates were employed at the time of their arrest, incomes for both groups could probably be considered low by today's standards. Examination of salaries of only those who reported

income for their last job, indicated a mean weekly gross salary of $396 for graduates and $327 for dropouts. However, the median salary for all respondents was only $300 per week and the mode was only $200. This did not take into account those subjects reporting no income, unemployed or earning illegal monies. Nineteen percent depended on welfare at some time. Therefore, two factors shared by criminals, whether dropouts or graduates, were relatively low-incomes when employment was experienced and a high rate of unemployment at time of arrest.

Forty-seven percent of the dropouts admitted using drugs in school (see Table 15) and 21% of the dropouts gave drug use as a reason for dropping out. Use of drugs has been attributed to dropping out (Dunham and Alpert, 1987). The frequency of drug use in school by criminal graduates was just as great as that of dropouts and when subjects were asked to list their high school's greatest problem, the most common response by both groups was drugs. In other words, high frequency of drug use in school was a factor these criminals shared whether dropout or graduate. At the time of arrest, 44% of this sample said they were using drugs (46% of the dropouts and 36% of the graduates). Innes (1988), reporting for the Bureau of Justice Statistics, has noted that 43% of the state inmates nationwide used drugs regularly at the time of their offense. Based on

these statistics and the high percentage of inmates serving time for robbery, burglary, and drug-related offenses, it is reasonable to conclude that not only does drug use result in school-related problems and dropping out, but also in criminal activity. Since most subjects were either unemployed or earning low incomes, most money for purchase of drugs was probably obtained illegally.

That juvenile criminality often precedes adult criminality has been reported in several studies by the Bureau of Justice Statistics ("Report to the Nation," 1988). This survey found that 53% of the inmates were arrested within two years of leaving school, meaning that they were probably still in their teens. Thirty-two percent were arrested while still attending school (35% dropouts and 21% graduates, see Table 15). What this indicates is that a large percentage of inmates in a maximum-security prison not only started their criminal careers as juveniles, but many were still in school at the time their criminal careers began.

Eighty-four percent of the sample lived in an urban setting. Undoubtedly, a city environment made gang affiliation as a teenager more accessible than living in the suburbs or the country. (Breakdown by gang affiliation revealed that 89% of those belonging to a gang did live in a city.) Although findings showed the percentage of dropouts belonging to a gang to be quite

high, it was not significantly greater than that of graduates. Thus, gang affiliation appeared to be another factor that a high percentage of criminals shared, whether they were dropouts or graduates.

Family backgrounds of subjects showed some very desirable elements to be missing for both groups. Only 48% of the subjects (45% of dropouts and 57% of graduates) lived with both parents while the other 52% lived with either one natural parent, generally the mother or some other arrangement. This compares to about 20% in the general population who grew up with only one parent ("Report to the Nation," 1988).

Over 25% of the subjects said their parents or guardians received public assistance and a similar percentage said an immediate family member served time in prison. Furthermore, about one-quarter of the subjects had a father who dropped out of school, and/or a mother who dropped out of school, while 47% said they did not know what grade level their father achieved (understandable since over 50% were raised by a single parent, usually the mother). However, 35% did not know their mother's last academic grade of completion despite the fact that most had a mother in their family arrangement. These findings suggest that positive role modeling and parental communication were deficient.

Since the mean number of children, counting subjects, was over five per family, it could be surmised

that attaining parental attention (particularly since only one was present in many cases) presented a struggle for many and parental monitoring was lessened. Poor monitoring, along with poor role modeling, may be another reason why many of these subjects joined a gang as teenagers where group affiliation was afforded, but unfortunately bad behavior and habits were probably acquired. Gang membership leads to conflict with school and dropping out (Hess, 1987). Furthermore, that most gang members, in general, are probably dropouts, may help explain why 50% of the dropouts in the present study said they had good friends who were dropouts. That dropouts, in general, had dropout friends, also suggests that peer pressures may have contributed to their decision to drop out.

It was found that a high percentage of dropouts (58%) had one or more siblings who also dropped out of school (see Table 17). This was significantly greater than that of graduates. However, the sibling dropout rate for graduates was also high (39%), suggesting that even in families of graduates, school success was not considered vital. Thus, another commonality of dropouts and graduates is a lower family success rate in school completion.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS, AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary and Conclusions

This study was primarily about why four-fifths of the men in New York State prisons are school dropouts. To understand this problem it was necessary to obtain the educational and criminal history as well as the personal and socioeconomic background of those men who were dropouts and compare them to the graduates who were also in prison.

The greatest contributions of this research were the findings that the dropouts, who make up about 80 percent of the prison population, show many of the school-related characteristics found in dropouts not in prison (as determined from the research literature), but show differences as well as similarities to graduates in prison in a number of important variables.

Criminal dropouts surveyed in this study experienced a significantly higher rate of grade retention, school transfers, misbehavior, poor attendance and poor academic performance than graduates in prison and significantly less involvement in extracurricular activities. This suggested that

criminal dropouts can be distinguished from criminal graduates based on these school-related variables.

Since the mean grade for dropping out was 9.9 in this sample, it appeared dropouts in prison suffer a discrepancy between grade of completion and actual level in writing and math, since their reading and math scores upon entering prison are well below the grade level they completed based on state testing. Also, since a high rate of grade retention took place in elementary school, it is probable that poor academic performance at the elementary level carried over to the higher grades. If this is the case, the schools they attended must be held partly responsible for not adequately preparing most to perform at grade level despite retaining them in grades. Although many dropouts said they enjoyed their elementary school, they were less likely than graduates to believe their elementary teachers took a personal interest in them. As they progressed in grades, even more dropouts felt this way about their teachers. Misbehavior and high absenteeism may have resulted partly as a reaction to their frustration in school and not seeing its relevance in their life.

The situation at home for many subjects was very bleak, although somewhat worse for the dropout group. Indeed, adverse family situations and poor role modeling most likely contributed to the problems many of these subjects had in school as well as in society. Most were

reared by only one family member, generally their mother. Welfare was common. Sibling numbers were extraordinarily large. Education level of parents was generally low or not known. Sibling dropout rates were high. Many immediate family members also served time in prison. Being reared in a poor urban setting with little parental guidance also made gang affiliation attractive and drug use prevalent. Very likely, parental affection and attention presented a competitive challenge.

Following departure from school, one-third of the dropouts met with immediate unemployment. At time of arrest, one-half were unemployed. Although graduates fared much better in terms of employment, income levels were still relatively low. Drug use was prevalent in both groups while attending school as well as before incarceration. Dropouts were imprisoned at an earlier age than graduates, probably due to their higher rate of unemployment and idleness. Dropouts also experienced a higher rate of recidivism.

Dropouts gave "wanting to work, bored with courses, poor grades, drug problems and expulsion or suspension" as the main reasons for dropping out. In general, their support from school authorities and school counselors appeared low. However, most took responsibility for their action to drop out and blamed only themselves. When questioned, almost all dropouts felt dropping out

kept them from getting a good job. About one-half felt dropping out was partly responsible for their trouble with the law. Almost all said that if they could do it over they would have stayed in school.

School in prison has played an important part in raising the educational level of many inmates. About 85% of the dropouts in this sample attended school in prison and more than half acquired a high school equivalency diploma in prison. About one-third of the dropouts went on to college while in prison. Graduates primarily attended the college program, but vocational training was also popular with both groups. All ethnic groups participated equally. Many believed that the education they received in prison was something they passed up in regular school and believed that this education and/or vocational training would make a difference in their lives. The primary reasons for going to school in prison were to better themselves, to take the GED exam, and to get a good job when released.

The future plans for most centered on staying out of trouble, attaining a job, and making a better life for themselves and their families.

Methodological Issues and Recommendations for Further Research

This study was primarily descriptive in nature. Many of its findings are suggestive, rather than

definitive. In order to provide more substantial evidence regarding dropping out of school and its consequences, particularly as it relates to criminality, a number of methodological concerns are addressed and recommendations for further research are given:

1. All data depended on self-reporting which is affected by one's perception of a situation. Perceptions can be inaccurate. Future researchers may consider obtaining data from official records such as school, police, and correctional sources.
2. Subjects' information regarding personal data, family background and criminal background, such as drug use, may be inaccurate due to its sensitive nature. For this reason future researchers may again consider obtaining data from official records.
3. Subjects' recall of information, events and feelings of their past may have become tainted by time. Although the present study used a closed format on the questionnaire which may have aided recall, future researchers may consider other ways to enhance the memory process for more accurate recall.
4. Since all the data was collected from a single all-male maximum security facility at New York State's Sing Sing Correctional Facility, generalizing from the results was limited. Future researchers may consider using several correctional facilities state-wide as well as nationwide.

5. As this study dealt only with criminals, there were limitations on generalizing the findings to non-criminals as well as comparing criminal dropouts to non-criminal dropouts. Future researchers should consider conducting a study using a sample of non-criminals and then comparing the results to a sample of criminals. Moderator variables such as socioeconomic status should be considered in choosing the samples.

6. Criminal dropouts in this study exhibited many of the educational background characteristics found in non-criminal dropouts (based on the research literature), suggesting educational background alone was not the instigating factor leading to crime. Future researchers may consider conducting a comparative study of criminals and non-criminals to determine what variables might account for their difference regarding criminal behavior. The groups should have similar educational and socioeconomic profiles.

7. Because the sample was random and consisted of only 220 subjects, the number of graduates was relatively low compared to dropouts. Future researchers may consider using a larger sample or one that is stratified in order to increase the number of graduates. Stratification by ethnicity and/or age may also be considered.

8. The present study utilized a cross-sectional design to help understand the reasons students dropped out and its connection to criminality. Future researchers may

consider a longitudinal design where a cohort of dropouts as well as graduates are studied to determine why some become criminals while others do not.

9. The present study found that a significantly greater percent of dropouts than graduates misbehaved in school. This finding was consistent with other research. Future researchers may consider finding the causes of misbehavior in school so it can be better understood and controlled.

10. It was found that 50% of the dropouts were retained in grades. This was significantly greater than the percent of graduates. Further information is needed on grade retention. Future researchers may consider studying the effects of grade retention and its impact on the student, the school and even society.

11. This study found that a significantly greater proportion of dropouts transferred school districts or changed classes during the year. Other researchers have recorded an association of high student mobility and dropping out, but the nexus is not clear. Future researchers may consider exploring what effects mobility, such as school transfers, have on student performance and dropping out.

Recommendations to Schools

There are many studies which offer recommendations on how to alleviate the dropout problem in our schools

(Alpert and Dunham, 1986; Brodinsky, 1989; Conrath, 1988; "Dealing with Dropouts," 1987; Ekstrom et al., 1986; Gross, 1989; Grossnickle, 1986; Hahn, 1987; Ruby and Law, 1987; Shanker, 1989; Wagner, 1984; Woodring, 1989). To repeat these recommendations would only be an exercise in redundancy. However, based on the findings in this research, the following recommendations are offered to school officials:

1. Dropouts in prison are reading well below the grade level they completed. Elementary schools which generate high numbers of dropouts may consider evaluating their achievement scores to determine what portion of the dropouts were reading below grade level at their entrance to junior high school. If this correlation is high, corrective evaluation of teaching methodologies and practices may be warranted.

2. Dropouts in this study exhibited a high rate of grade retention, primarily in the elementary grades. Grade retention generally results in overage students and this has been correlated with dropping out. Elementary schools, having high retention rates, may want to evaluate their grade retention policies and consider remediation programs in those areas where students are deficient rather than leaving them back to repeat an entire year. If the retention rate is high, examination of the teaching methodologies and practices may also be warranted.

3. Dropouts in this study exhibited most of the characteristic school-related signs generally prevalent in at-risk youth prior to dropping out. Elementary schools, but especially secondary schools, may consider monitoring students with characteristics which signal a student is at risk of dropping out, e.g., misbehavior, poor attendance, and poor academic performance. School officials may consider giving such students added personal attention by teachers, counselors, and even school psychologists in order to alleviate the at-risk factors. Potential dropouts may need additional reassurance that their teachers care about their welfare and assured their teachers can be trusted and approached. Often misbehavior, poor attendance and poor academic performance are not problems in and of themselves, but rather the symptoms of problems.

4. Drug use was prevalent in this sample. Drug use invariably led to problems in school as well as criminality. Schools may need to evaluate their present approach regarding the issues of student drug use. This could be done as part of a curriculum beginning in the elementary grades.

5. Many dropouts in this study were reared under less than ideal home conditions where parental affiliation with the school was low. Schools may want to promote parent awareness, interest, participation, and support regarding their children's education. This may be

especially important in those families where the parents are dropouts. Communication by the school can be by mail, telephone, or in person. Such practices could help break the cycle of dropping out. Schools may also consider developing programs other than the PTA to involve such parents. Family counseling may be another consideration.

6. Many subjects in this survey belonged to gangs. Gang membership often leads to problems in school as well as with the law. In those urban settings where gangs are prevalent, school authorities may consider communicating to students that gang membership is not the answer to their social deficiencies. Schools may consider working jointly with police authorities in this effort.

7. Many dropouts in this study did not see the relevance of school to their life. Schools with high dropout rates may need to evaluate their curriculum to determine if it is relevant to students' needs and possibly incorporate relevance for all subject matter taught.

8. Many of the dropouts in this report left school to seek employment. For some, work was an alternative to failure. Schools may consider work-study programs. Such students could perform certain jobs for the school, e.g., library or custodial work. Businesses in the community may also get involved via a student-business-

school link. These programs could help reinforce to students that hasty employment following dropping out generally leads to low-paying jobs or even future unemployment.

9. Many of the dropouts in this study suffered from low job skills and high unemployment. Schools may consider encouraging vocational studies for those students seeking an alternative to an academic track.

10. A significantly greater percent of graduates participated in extracurricular activities in this study. It has been reported that such activities promote attachment or bonding to the school. Schools may need to evaluate their extracurricular programs and develop methods to entice at-risk students to partake in such activities. This participation could possibly enhance these students' identity with the school as well as improve their academic performance.

Recommendations to Department of Corrections

1. Although most inmates in this study did participate in the academic, vocational, and/or college program, mutual cooperation and coordination between school and parole might improve the operations of these programs since the least frequent reason cited by inmates for going to school was to impress the parole board (see Table 45). Incentives for program participation may be considered.

2. More than 60% of the subjects in this study were recidivists. Although it has been shown that GED and college degrees acquired in prison often lend themselves to lower rates of recidivism, many of those who acquire such a degree return to prison. The New York State Department of Corrections may want to ascertain why some men commit new crimes while others do not. Further research may also be done to determine how acquiring a GED diploma and/or college degree in prison affects recidivism. This could be performed using a longitudinal design where a cohort of released prisoners are studied over time to determine what inmates with degrees do differently from those not having degrees to account for their lower rate of prison return.

3. Many inmates in this study admitted having physical and learning disabilities. This finding is consistent with other findings, including that of John Nuttall (1987), director of education for the Department of Corrections in New York State. Future research may be done on how disabilities impact an inmate's rate of recidivism. Research could also be conducted on how such inmates can better be served to maximize their chances for a successful return to society.

Recommendations for Model and Theory Development

1. Alpert and Dunham (1986) used five predictor variables for predicting school dropout. They were:

misbehavior in school, not seeing school relevant to future job success, doing poorly in school, having parents who do not monitor their child's activities, and having friends who dropped out. In a later 1987 study, while working with delinquent youths, these researchers added the variables of drug use, having friends who were trouble makers, and not living with both parents (see Chapter II, "Models and Theories Explaining Dropouts"). Findings in the present study, in support of Dunham's and Alpert's models, suggested that dropouts displayed a high incidence of all these variables. Future researchers may consider testing further these predictive models. Future researchers may also consider exploring why some dropouts display these variables and others do not, and determining in more detail what overall effect these variables have on school performance as well as school completion.

2. In strain theory, Cohen (1955) reasoned that lower class youth would have the greatest problems academically, would find school a frustration, and would be the most likely to turn to delinquency and gang affiliation in order to find standards they could meet successfully. The present study found that the majority of criminal dropouts were black or Hispanic and of low socioeconomic status. Many of these subjects, in support of strain theory, exhibited disruption in school and the frustration of failure. Furthermore, many

belonged to gangs and all turned to crime. Future researchers may consider exploring further those aspects of behavior in criminals as they relate to strain theory.

3. In social control theory, Hirschi (1969) hypothesized that students who exhibited an attachment or bonding to the school, their teachers and/or parents would be less inclined to engage in delinquent behavior. The present study found, in support of social control theory, that many of the inmate subjects, particularly the dropouts, did not enjoy school and did not care what their teachers thought of them. Future researchers may consider studying in more detail those aspects of behavior in criminals as they relate to social control theory.

4. According to the participation-identification model, students who participate in classroom or other school activities tend to identify with the school, thereby, making their failure and delinquency less likely (Finn, 1989). The present study found, in support of this theory, that a significantly greater percentage of graduates than dropouts participated in extracurricular activities. The graduates' activities were also more diverse. The effects of such participation are unclear and inconsistent in the literature. Therefore, further information is needed on this issue. Future researchers should consider controlled experiments where such

activities can be evaluated. Moderator variables such as age, socioeconomic status, school size and type of activities may also be considered in choosing the samples.

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APPENDIX A
LETTER OF PERMISSION

STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES
THE STATE OFFICE BUILDING CAMPUS
ALBANY, N.Y. 12226

THOMAS A. COUGHLIN III
COMMISSIONER

HAROLD HIFT
ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

August 24, 1988

Mr. Robert Stephens
25 King Road
Hopewell Junction, NY 12533

Dear Mr. Stephens:

I am pleased to inform you that your request to conduct a research project at Sing Sing Correctional Facility is approved.

Moreover, I am referring your request to broaden the survey to inmates at Green Haven Correctional Facility to the Green Haven administration for their review and comments. After I have received their input, I will inform you of my decision in regard to that component of the study.

Sincerely,

Paul Korotkin

Paul Korotkin
Project Assistant

PK:KHG:cb
Enclosure
cc: James Sullivan, Superintendent
Sing Sing Correctional Facility
John P. Keane, First Deputy Superintendent
Sing Sing Correctional Facility
Kenneth Guempel, Deputy Superintendent for Programs
Sing Sing Correctional Facility

APPENDIX B
QUESTIONNAIRE

A STUDY IS BEING CONDUCTED THROUGH NEW YORK UNIVERSITY ON THE EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF MEN IN PRISON. TWO QUESTIONS RELATE TO USING DRUGS. YOUR IDENTITY WILL NOT BE MADE KNOWN ON THIS QUESTIONNAIRE NOR IN THIS STUDY. YOUR PARTICIPATION IS PURELY VOLUNTARY AND WILL NOT AFFECT YOUR SENTENCE IN ANY WAY.

Objective

1. How old are you? _____

2. In what country or state did you attend school?
_____

3. In what year did you last attend school when on the street? _____

4. What kind of schools did you attend? (Check all that apply)
___ 1. Public ___ 2. Private
___ 3. Catholic ___ 4. Military
___ 5. BOCES
___ 6. Other (Specify) _____

5. Were you bused to school?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
Comments: _____

6. In what type of neighborhood did you live?
_____ 1. City
_____ 2. Country
_____ 3. Other
_____

7. How did you feel about elementary school?
_____ 1. Enjoyed it. _____ 2. Didn't enjoy it.
_____ 3. Hated it. _____ 4. Don't know
What did you enjoy and/or hate most? _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

8. Did you feel you could trust most of your elementary school teachers?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
Comments: _____
_____
_____

9. Do you feel most of your elementary school teachers took a personal interest in teaching you?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
Comments: _____
_____
_____

10. What grade would you give your elementary teachers overall?
_____ 1. A _____ 2. B _____ 3. C
_____ 4. D _____ 5. F

11. How did you feel about junior/senior high school?
_____ 1. Enjoyed it. _____ 2. Didn't enjoy it.
_____ 3. Hated it. _____ 4. Don't know
What did you enjoy and/or hate most? _____
_____
_____
_____

12. Did you feel you could trust most of your junior/senior high school teachers?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
Comments: _____
_____
_____

13. Do you feel most of your junior/senior high teachers took a personal interest in teaching you?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No _____ 3. Not sure
Comments: _____
_____
_____

14. Did you feel you could share any of your personal problems or concerns with your junior or senior high school teachers?
_____ 1. Yes _____ No
Explain: _____
_____
_____

15. What grade would you give your junior/senior high school teachers overall?
_____ 1. A _____ 2. B _____ 3. C
_____ 4. D _____ 5. F

Why this grade? _____
_____
_____

16. In what ways did the educational system meet your needs? (Check all that apply)
_____ 1. School taught me to read and write
_____ 2. Courses developed my talents and abilities
_____ 3. School and classes were a place I could meet and make friends
_____ 4. School prepared me for the future
_____ 5. School taught me how to behave
_____ 6. Other (Specify) _____
_____
_____ 7. Did not meet my needs in any way

17. In what ways could the educational system have done a better job in meeting your needs? (Check all that apply)
_____ 1. Maintained stricter rules and orders
_____ 2. Made courses more practical
_____ 3. Made course work more difficult
_____ 4. Made course work less difficult
_____ 5. Better developed my talents and abilities
_____ 6. Emphasized vocational training
_____ 7. Helped me find a job
_____ 8. Was fine as it was
_____ 9. Other (Specify) _____
_____

18. What do you feel was your junior/senior high school's greatest problems?
_____
_____
_____

19. Do you feel you were respected by most of your teachers?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
Comments: _____
_____

20. In general, did you care about what your teachers thought of you as a person?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
_____ 3. Not very much
Comments: _____
_____

21. In general, were you graded fairly for your efforts in school? _____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
Comments: _____
_____

22. In general, what was your performance in junior/senior high school?
_____ 1. Excellent _____ 4. Fair
_____ 2. Very Good _____ 5. Poor
_____ 3. Good _____ 6. Failing
Comments: _____
_____

23. What grade would you have given yourself overall?
_____ 1. A _____ 2. B _____ 3. C
_____ 4. D _____ 5. F
Why this grade? _____
_____

24. Did you participate in sports or other activities in junior/senior high school?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
Name the activities: _____
_____
_____

25. Did you have any learning or physical disabilities while in school?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
Specify: _____
_____

26. Do you have any physical or mental problems that affected your ability to read or concentrate?
_____ 1. Yes (Explain) _____
_____ 2. No
If yes, in what way did the school meet or not meet your disability? _____
_____
_____

27. Were you in a special education class in school?
_____ 1. Yes (Specify) _____
_____
_____ 2. No

28. Did you receive any vocational or job training in junior/senior high school?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
What type of training? _____
_____

29. Did you ever receive physical punishment in school?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
If yes, what was your punishment for and what were your feelings about such punishment?
_____
_____
_____

30. Are you in favor of physical punishment for misbehavior in school?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
Comments:
_____
_____
_____

/a 31. Were you ever sent to the office for misbehavior in your last two years of school?
_____ 1. 5 or more times a year
_____ 2. 3 or 4 times a year
_____ 3. 1 or 2 times a year
_____ 4. Never

/c 32. Did you ever take drugs in school?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
What type? Specify: _____

/c 33. Were you ever arrested while in school?
_____ 1. Yes At what ages? _____
_____ 2. No

2 34. As a teenager, did you ever belong to a gang?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No

/a 35. Were you ever left back in school?
_____ 1. Yes In what grade(s) _____
_____ 2. No
If yes, do you think the school was right in leaving you back?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
Describe your feelings about it _____

/a 36. Did you ever transfer to a different school district or change classes during the year?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
If yes, in what grade(s)? _____

4 37. Did you feel that you fit in and were considered just as important as the other students in your junior or senior high school?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
Comments: _____

5 38. Were you brought up by both your natural parents?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
Specify by whom _____

5 39. In general, do you feel your parents/guardians took a personal interest in you?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
Comments: _____

5 40. Were your parents or guardians ever called to the school?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
If yes, explain why: _____
Did they go to the school when called?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
Comments: _____

5 41. Did your parents or guardians ever participate in any school decision or go to any school events such as Open House, P.T.A. meetings, school plays, concerts, etc.? _____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
If yes, what decision or events? _____

5 42. How often did you have contact with a school counselor in your last year of school?
_____ 1. Frequently, 5 or more times per year
_____ 2. Occasionally, 3 or 4 times per year
_____ 3. Twice
_____ 4. Once
_____ 5. Never

/a 43. In your last two years of school, how was your attendance?
_____ 1. Never absent
_____ 2. Absent occasionally
_____ 3. Absent frequently
_____ 4. Out more than in
_____ 5. Almost never attended
If you were frequently absent, what was the reason?
Explain: _____

2 44. What did you do immediately after leaving school?
_____ 1. Job _____ 2. College
_____ 3. Hang-out
_____ 4. Other (Explain) _____

/c 45. When you left school how long were you out before your first arrest? _____

2 46. After leaving school were you ever on welfare?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No

/b 47. Did you receive any vocational or job training after leaving school?
_____ 1. Yes _____ No
What type? Specify: _____

2 48. What jobs have you had since leaving school and for how long?
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

2 49. What was your last occupation on the street?
_____
For how long? _____

2 50. Were you employed at the time of your arrest?
____ 1. Yes ____ 2. No

2 51. What was your weekly salary before coming to prison? _____

/c 52. Were you using drugs at the time of your arrest?
____ 1. Yes ____ 2. No

/c 53. How many times have you been in prison?
_____

/c 54. How many years of your life have you spent in prison? _____

/a 55. Did you graduate from high school and receive a regular high school diploma? (Not G.E.D.)
____ 1. Yes In what year? _____
____ 2. No

IF YES, GO DIRECTLY TO QUESTION 74 (ONLY IF YOU GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL AND HAVE A REGULAR HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA.)

56. If the answer to question 55 (above) is no, in what grade did you drop out of school? _____

/a 57. What age were you? _____

6 58. Why did you drop out? (Check all that apply)
____ 1. Was expelled or suspended
____ 2. Had poor grades
____ 3. Was on drugs
____ 4. Bored with courses
____ 5. Waste of time
____ 6. Couldn't get along with teachers
____ 7. Couldn't get along with other students
____ 8. Teachers weren't interested in my welfare
____ 9. Couldn't keep up with the school work
____ 10. Wanted to work full time
____ 11. Had to support family
____ 12. Was getting married or was married
____ 13. Girlfriend was pregnant
____ 14. Had a problem with the language
____ 15. Illness
____ 16. Other (Specify) _____

6 59. At the time you dropped out would you say your grades in general were:
____ 1. High ____ 3. Below average
____ 2. Average ____ 4. Not passing

7 60. At the time you dropped out of school did you believe that education was necessary for your future success?
____ 1. Yes ____ 2. No
Comments: _____
_____

7 61. If you dropped out, do you regret it today?
____ 1. Yes ____ 2. No
Comments: _____
_____
_____

6 62. Did most of your good friends also quit school?
____ 1. Yes ____ 2. No

6 63. If you dropped out and regret it, who do you blame for this decision? (Check all that apply)
____ 1. School system in general
____ 2. The principal
____ 3. Some of your teachers
____ 4. Your friends
____ 5. Your enemies
____ 6. Yourself
____ 7. No one

7 64. If you dropped out, in what way do you feel it harmed you? (Check all that apply)
____ 1. Kept me from getting a good job
____ 2. Ended formal learning
____ 3. Gave me more time to hang out and get in trouble.
____ 4. Separated me from my friends
____ 5. Made me feel less important
____ 6. Other (Specify) _____
_____

7 65. If you dropped out and could do it over, would you have stayed in school?
____ 1. Yes ____ 2. No
Comments: _____
_____

5 66. How did your parents/guardians react when you decided to drop school? (Check all that apply)
____ 1. Didn't care
____ 2. Accepted it
____ 3. They were happy
____ 4. They were sad
____ 5. They were angry
____ 6. Encouraged me to stay
____ 7. Other (Specify)

67. Did anyone discuss alternatives to dropping out of school? (If so check all that apply)
_____ 1. No
_____ 2. Yes, parent/guardian
_____ 3. Yes, friend
_____ 4. Yes, teachers
_____ 5. Yes, counselor
_____ 6. Yes, principal
_____ 7. Other (Specify) _____

68. If you dropped out do you think dropping out resulted in some way in your committing a crime?
_____ 1. Yes Why? _____
_____
_____ 2. No

69. If you had completed high school do you think you would probably be in prison today anyway?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
Comments: _____
_____

70. Do you believe that in today's world education is important to one's future success?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No _____ 3. Not sure
Comments: _____
_____

/a 71. Did you return to school after dropping out?
_____ 1. Yes Explain _____
_____
_____ 2. No

/a 72. If you have a GED diploma where did you take the test?
_____ 1. Street _____ 2. Prison _____ 3. Military
_____ 4. Other (Specify) _____

73. If you don't have a GED diploma, do you plan on getting one in the future?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No

74. Are you aware that the prison has an academic and vocational school?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No

75. Were you ever enrolled in the prison's academic, vocational or college programs?
_____ 1. Yes Check all that apply:
_____ Academic Program
_____ Vocational Program
_____ 2. No _____ College Program

IF NO, GO DIRECTLY TO QUESTION 81.

76. For how many months were you enrolled in the prison's school? _____

77. Did going to school in prison help you?
_____ 1. Yes (Specify) _____
_____
_____ 2. No

78. In general, would you say going to school in prison made or will make a difference in your life?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
If yes, how? _____
_____

79. What grade would you give the prison's teachers overall?
___ 1. A ___ 2. B ___ 3. C ___ 4. D. ___ 5. F
Comments: _____
_____

80. Why did you attend school in prison? (Check all that apply)
_____ 1. To take the GED
_____ 2. To better myself
_____ 3. To get a better job when released
_____ 4. To enroll in college
_____ 5. To enroll in vocational school
_____ 6. To impress the parole board
_____ 7. Other (Specify) _____
_____

/a 81. Do you have any difficulty in writing?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No
Comments: _____
_____

/a 82. In general how often do you read each day?
_____ 1. 3 to 5 hours
_____ 2. 2 to 3 hours
_____ 3. 1 hour
_____ 4. less than one hour
_____ 5. never

83. What is your ethnic background?
_____ 1. Black _____ 2. White
_____ 3. Hispanic _____ 4. Asian
_____ 5. Other (Specify) _____

84. What is your primary spoken language?
_____ 1. English _____ 2. Spanish
_____ 3. Other (Specify) _____

85. What is your marital status?
_____ 1. Single _____ 2. Common law
_____ 3. Married _____ 4. Divorced
_____ 5. Widowed _____ 6. Separated

86. Do you have any children?
_____ 1. No _____ 2. Yes (how many?) _____

87. Were you ever in the military?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No

88. What was the last school grade your father completed? _____

89. What was the last school grade your mother completed? _____

90. What is/was your father's occupation? _____

91. What is/was your mother's occupation? _____

92. Were your parents or guardians ever on welfare?
_____ 1. Yes. Specify how long _____
_____ 2. No

93. How many children were in your family? _____
____ 1. Number of brothers
____ 2. Number of sisters

94. Have any of your brothers or sisters dropped out of school?
_____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No

95. Have any members of your immediate family (father, mother, sisters, brothers, guardians) served time in prison?
_____ 1. Yes (Specify) _____
_____
_____ 2. No

96. What are your plans for the future?
_____
_____
_____
_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ANSWERS TO THE ABOVE QUESTIONS. PLEASE ADD ANY FURTHER COMMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE REGARDING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

APPENDIX C
SPANISH QUESTIONNAIRE

LA UNIVERSIDAD DE NUEVA YORK ESTA CONDUCIENDO UN ESTUDIO SOBRE LA HISTORIA EDUCACIONAL DE LOS HOMRES EN PRISIÓN. DOS DE LAS PREGUNTAS ESTÁN RELACIONADAS CON EL USO DE LAS DROGAS. SU IDENTIDAD NO SE DARÁ A CONOCER EN ESTE CUESTIONARIO NE EN ESTE ESTUDIO. SU PARTICIPACIÓN ES PURAMENTE VOLUNTARIA Y NO AFECTARA SU SENTENCIA EN NINGUNA FORMA.

1. ¿ Su edad? _____

2. ¿ En que país o estado fue usted a la escuela?
_____

3. ¿En qué año fué la última vez que usted asistió a la escuela mientras estaba en la calle?_____

4. ¿ Qué clase de escuela atendio? (Ponga un talón o contraseña en todo to que aplique a usted.)
___ 1. Publica ___ 2. Privada
___ 3. Católica ___ 4. Militar
___ 5. BOCES
___ 6. Otras (Especifique)_____

5. ¿ Fue usted transportado en ómnibus a la escuela?
1. Si ____ 2. No
Comentarios: _____

6. ¿ En qué clase de vecindario (Barrio) vivió usted?
___ 1. Ciudad
___ 2. Campo
___ 3. Otros
_____

7. ¿ Cómo se sentía sobre la escuela primaria?
___ 1. La disfruto ___ 2. No la disfruto
___ 3. La odiaba ___ 4. No sabe
¿Qué le gustaba u odiaba MÁS? _____

8. ¿ Sentía usted que podía confiar en casi todos sus maestros de escuela elementaria?
1. Si ____ 2. No
Comentarios: _____

9. ¿ Cree usted que sus maestros de escuela elementaria se tomaron un interés personal en enseñarle?
___ 1. Si ___ 2. No
Comentarios: _____

10. En general, ¿ que grado les daría usted a sus maestros elementarios?
___ 1. A ___ 2. B ___ 3. C
___ 4. D ___ 5. F

11. ¿ Como se sentía usted sobre la escuela intermedia/secundaria?
___ 1. La disfruto ___ 2. No la disfruto
___ 3. La odiaba ___ 4. No sabe
¿Qué le gustaba u odiaba MÁS? _____

12. ¿ Sentía usted que podía confiar en casi todos sus maestros de escuela intermedia/secundaria?
1. Si ____ 2. No
Comentarios: _____

13. ¿ Cree que sus maestros de escuela intermedia/secundaria se tomaron un interés personal en enseñarle?
1. Si ____ 2. No ____ 3. No estoy seguro
Comentarios: _____

14. ¿ Sentía usted que podía confiar sus preocupaciones o problemas personales con sus maestros de escuela intermedia/secundaria?
1. Si ____ No
Explique: _____

15. En general, ¿ que grado les daría usted a sus maestros de escuela intermedia/secundaria?
___ 1. A ___ 2. B ___ 3. C
___ 4. D ___ 5. F
¿POR QUE este grado? _____

16. ¿ En que forma el sistema educacional dio satisfacion a sus necesidades? (Ponga un talón o contraseña a todo lo que aplique.)
___ 1. En la escuela aprendí a leer y escribar.
___ 2. Los cursos desarrollaron mi talento y mis habilidades.
___ 3. La escuela y las clases eran un lugar donde podía conocer y hacer amigos.
___ 4. La escuela me preparo para el futuro.
___ 5. La escuela me enseño como comportarme.
___ 6. Otros (especifique) _____
___ 7. No hacia mis necesidades en lo absoluto.

17. ¿En qué forma el sistema educacional podría haber hecho un mejor trabajo para satisfacer sus necesidades? (Ponga un talon o contraseña en todo lo que aplique.)
_____ 1. Manteniendo reglas y órdenes más estrictas
_____ 2. Haciendo los cursos más practicos.
_____ 3. Haciendo el trabajo en los cursos más difícil.
_____ 4. Haciendo el trabajo en los cursos menos difícil.
_____ 5. Desarrollando mejor sus talentos y habilidades.
_____ 6. Poniendo mas enfásis en entrenamiento vocacional.
_____ 7. Ayudándose a encontrar un trabajo.
_____ 8. Estaba bien como era.
_____ 9. Otro (especifique) _____

18. ¿Cúal cree usted que fue su problema más grande en la escuela intermedia/secundaria?

19. ¿Siente usted que fué respetado por la mayoría de sus maestros?
_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No
Comentarios: _____

20. En general, ¿le importaba lo que sus maestros pensaran de usted como persona?
_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No
_____ 3. No mucho
Comentarios: _____

21. En general, ¿fueron sus calificaciones de acuerdo a su esfuerzo escolar?
_____ 1. Si _____ 2. No
Comentarios: _____

22. En general, ¿cual fue su actuación en la escuela intermedia/secundaria?
_____ 1. Excelente _____ 4. Razonable
_____ 2. Muy buen _____ 5. Pobre
_____ 3. Bien _____ 6. Malo
Comentarios: _____

23. En general, ¿que calificación se habría dado usted mismo?
_____ 1. A _____ 2. B _____ 3. C
_____ 4. D _____ 5. F
¿Por que este grado? _____

24. ¿Participó usted en deportes u otras actividades en la escuela intermedia/secundaria?
_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No Nombre las actividades:

25. ¿Tuvo usted alguna incapacidad de aprendizaje o física mientras estuvo en la escuela?
_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No Especifique:

26. ¿Tiene usted algún problema físico o mental el cual afecto su habilidad para leer o concentrarse?
_____ 1. Sí (Explique)
_____ 2. No Si su respuesta es Si, ¿en que manera la escuela hizo algo o no para ayudar con su incapacidad?

27. ¿Estuvo usted en un salon de educacion especial en la escuela?
_____ 1. Sí (Especifique) _____
_____ 2. No

28. Recibió usted alguna educación vocacional o adiestramiento en intermedia/secundaria?
_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No
¿Que clase de adiestramiento? _____

29. ¿Recibió usted alguna vez castigo físico en la escuela?
_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No
Si su respuesta es Si, ¿por qué fue castigado y cuales fueron sus sentimientos sobre dicho castigo?

30. ¿Está usted a favor de los castigos físicos por mal comportamiento en la escuela?
_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No Comentarios:

31. ¿Fué usted enviado alguna vez a la oficina por mal comportamiento en sus últimos dos años de escuela?
_____ 1. 5 o más veces al año.
_____ 2. 3 o 4 veces al año.
_____ 3. 1 o 2 veces al año.
_____ 4. Nunca.

32. ¿Uso usted drogas alguna vez en la escuela?
_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No
¿Qué tipo? Especifique: _____

33. ¿Fué usted arrestado alguna vez mientras estaba en la escuela?
_____ 1. Sí ¿A qué edad? _____
_____ 2. No

34. ¿Mientras era adolecente, perteneció usted a alguna ganga?

_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No

35. ¿Fué usted dejado atrás alguna vez en la escuela?
_____ 1. Sí En qué grado (curso) _____
_____ 2. No
Si su respuesta es Sí ¿piensa usted que la escuela hizo lo correcto en dejarlo atrás?
_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No
Deseo sus sentimientos sobre eso. _____
_____
_____

36. ¿Se cambio usted alguna vez para un distrito escolar diferente o cambio de clases durante el año?
_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No
Si su respuesta es Sí, ¿en que grado (curso)? _____

37. ¿Usted sentía que encajaba bien y era considerado tan importante como los demas estudiantes en su escuela intermedia/secundaria?
_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No
Comentarios: _____
_____
_____

38. ¿Fué usted criado por sus dos padres naturales?
_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No
Especifique por quién _____

39. En general, ¿usted, cree que sus padres/guardianes se tomaron un interes personal en usted?
_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No
Comentarios: _____
_____

40. ¿Fueron sus padres o guardianes llamados alguna vez a la escuela?
_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No
Si su respuesta es Sí, explique el por qué: _____
¿Fueron ellos a la escuela cuando los llamaron?
_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No Comentarios:
_____

41. ¿Sus padres o guardianes participaron alguna vez en alguna decisión de la escuela o fueron a alguno de los eventos de la escuela como Casa Abierta, reunion de P.T.A., obras de la escuela, concierto, etc.?

_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No
Si su respuesta es Sí, ¿cual fue la decisión o evento?
_____
_____

42. ¿Con que continuidad tuvo usted contacto con un consejero en su último año de escuela?
_____ 1. Frequentemente, 5 o mas veces por año
_____ 2. Ocacionalmente, 3 o 4 veces por año
_____ 3. Dos veces _____ 4. Una vez
_____ 5. Nunca

43. ¿Cómo fué su asistencia, en los dos últimos años de escuela?
_____ 1. Nunca estuve ausente.
_____ 2. Estuve ausente ocacionalmente.
_____ 3. Estuve ausente frecuentemente.
_____ 4. Estuve mas afuera que adentro.
_____ 5. Casi nunca atendí.
Si usted estuvo ausente frecuentemente cuál fué la razon. Explique: _____
_____

44. ¿Qué hizo usted inmediatamente después de salir de la escuela?
_____ 1. Trabajar _____ 2. Colegio
_____ 3. Pasearse (hang out)
_____ 4. Otra (Explique) _____

45. ¿Cuánto tiempo después de que usted dejo la escuela, fué arrestado por primera vez? _____

46. Después de dejar la escuela, ¿estuvo usted alguna vez en la Beneficiencia Publica (Welfare)?
_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No

47. ¿Recibió usted algún entrenamiento vocacional despues de dejar la escuela?
_____ 1. Sí _____ 2. No
¿Qué clase? Especifique: _____
_____

48. ¿Que trabajos ha tenido desde que dejó la escuela y por cuanto tiempo?
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

49. ¿Cual fué su última ocupación o trabajo en la calle?
_____
¿Por cuánto tiempo? _____

50. ¿Estaba usted empleado cuándo fué arrestado?
____ 1. Sí ____ 2. No

51. ¿Cual era su salario semanal antes de venir a la prisión? _____

52. ¿Estaba usted usando drogas en el momento de su arresto?
____ 1. Sí ____ 2. No

53. ¿Cuántas veces ha estado usted preso?
_____

54. ¿Cuantos años de su vida ha estado usted preso?
____

55. ¿Se graduó usted de escuela secundaria (bachillerato) y recibio el diploma regular de escuela secundaria (no el de GED)?
____ 1. Sí ¿En que ano? _____
____ 2. No

SI LA RESPUESTA ES SI, VAYA DIRECTAMENTE A LA PREGUNTA 74, (SOLAMENTE SI USTED SE GRADUO DE ESCUELA SECUNDARIA (BACHILLERATO) Y TIENE UN DIPLOMA REGULAR DE ESCUELA SECUNDARIA.)

56. Si contesto no a la pregunta numero 55, ¿en que grado se retiro (salio) de la escuela? _____

57. ¿Que edad tenia usted? _____

58. ¿Por que usted se retiró (salió)? (Marque todo lo que aplique)
____ 1. Fué votado o suspendido.
____ 2. Tenía malos grados.
____ 3. Estaba usando drogas.
____ 4. Estaba aburrido con los cursos.
____ 5. Perdida de tiempo.
____ 6. No se llevaba con los maestros.
____ 7. No se llevaba con los otros estudiantes.
____ 8. Los maestros no estaban preocupados en mi bienestar.
____ 9. No podía mantenerme al día con el trabajo de la escuela.
____ 10. Quería trabajar tiempo completo.
____ 11. Tenía que mantener a mi familia.
____ 12. Me iba a casar o estaba casado.
____ 13. La novia estaba embarazada.
____ 14. Tenía problema con el lenguaje.
____ 15. Enfermedad.
____ 16. Otro (Especifique) _____

59. ¿Al momento de retirarse sus grados, en general eran?
____ 1. Altos ____ 3. Más bajos que regulares
____ 2. Regulares ____ 4. No pasables

60. ¿En el tiempo que usted se salió de la escuela, creía usted que la educacion era necesaria para su suceso en el futuro?
____ 1. Sí ____ 2. No
Comentarios: _____

61. ¿Si usted se salió, le causa pesar hoy en día?
____ 1. Sí ____ 2. No
Comentarios: _____

62. Sus mejores amigos, ¿tambien salieron ellos de la escuela? ____ 1. Sí ____ 2. No

63. Si usted se salió y le causa pesar, ¿a quién culpa usted de su decisión? (Póngale un talón o contraseña a todo lo que aplique).
____ 1. El sistema escolar en general
____ 2. El rector
____ 3. Algunos de sus maestros
____ 4. Sus amigos
____ 5. Sus enemigos
____ 6. Usted mismo
____ 7. Nadie

64. Si usted se salió, ¿en que manera cree usted que le hizo dano? (Póngale un talón o contraseña a todo lo que aplique.)
____ 1. No pude conseguir un buen trabajo.
____ 2. Le corto el aprendizaje.
____ 3. Me dió mas tiempo para haraganear y meterme en problemas.
____ 4. Me separó de mis amistades.
____ 5. Me hizo sentir menos importante.
____ 6. Otra (Especifique) _____

65. Si usted salió y lo pudiese hacer de nuevo, ¿se habría quedado usted en la escuela?
_____ 1. Si _____ 2. No
Comentarios: _____

66. ¿Como reaccionaron sus padres/guardianes cuando usted decidio salirse de la escuela? (Pongale un talón o contraseña a todo lo que aplique.)
_____ 1. No les importo _____ 2. Lo aceptaron
_____ 3. Estaban felices _____ 4. Estaban tristes
_____ 5. Estaban enojados
_____ 6. Me entusiasmaron para que me cuidara.
_____ 7. Otros (Especifique) _____

67. ¿Alguien discutio otras alteratives antes de salirse de la escuela. (Marque todo lo que aplique.)
_____ 1. No _____ 2. Si, padres/guardianes
_____ 3. Si, amigos _____ 4. Si, maestros
_____ 5. Si, consejeros
_____ 6. Si, el rector
_____ 7. Otros (Especifique) _____

68. Si usted se salió, ¿piensa usted que el haberse salido resulto en alguna manera en que usted cometiese un crimen?
_____ 1. Si Por que _____
_____
_____ 2. No

69. Si usted hubiese terminado la escuela secundaria, ¿seria probable que estuviese usted en prisión de todas maneras?
_____ 1. Si _____ 2. No
Comentarios: _____

70. ¿Cree usted que en el mundo de hoy la educación es importante para el futuro de uno?
_____ 1. Si _____ 2. No _____ 3. No se
Comentarios: _____

71. ¿Regreso usted a la escuela despues de haberse salido?
_____ 1. Si Explique _____
_____
_____ 2. No

72. Si usted tiene un diploma de equivalencia (G.E.D.) ¿donde cogio el examen?
_____ 1. En la calle _____ 2. En la carcel
_____ 3. En el ejercito _____ 4. Otro, especifique _____

73. Si usted no tiene un diploma de equivalencia (G.E.D.), ¿tiene planes para conseguir uno en el futuro?
_____ 1. Si _____ 2. No

74. ¿Tiene usted conocimiento de que la prisión tiene escuela academica y vocacional?
_____ 1. Si _____ 2. No

75. ¿Estuvo usted matriculado alguna vez en la escuela academica, vocacional o programa de colegio (universidad)?
_____ 1. Si Marque todo lo que aplique
_____ Programa academico
_____ Programa vocacional
_____ Programa Colegial
2. No
SI SU RESPUESTA ES 'NO', VAYA DIRECTAMENTE A LA PREGUNTA #81.

76. ¿Cuantos meses estuvo usted matriculado en la escuela de la prisión? _____

77. ¿Piensa usted que el haber ido a la escuela en la prision lo ha ayudado?
_____ 1. Si (Especifique) _____
_____
_____ 2. No

78. En general, ¿diria usted que el asistir a la escuela en la prisión ha causado o causara diferencia en su vida?
_____ 1. Si ¿Como? _____
_____ 2. No

79. En general, ¿que calificación le daría usted a los maestros de la prisión?
1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D. 5. F
Comentarios: _____
_____

80. ¿Por que asistió a la escuela en la prisión? (Marque todo lo que aplique).
_____ 1. Para coger el Examen de Equivalencia
_____ 2. Para mejorar mi persona
_____ 3. Para conseguir un trabajo mejor cuando me pongan en libertad
_____ 4. Para matricularme en la universidad (colegio)
_____ 5. Para matricularme en la escuela vocacional
_____ 6. Para impresionar a la Junta de Libertad Bajo Palabra (Parole Board)
_____ 7. Otro (Especifique) _____
_____

81. ¿Tiene usted dificultad escribiendo?
____ 1. Sí ____ 2. No
COMENTARIOS _____
_____

82. En general, ¿cuánto lee usted diariamente?
____ 1. 3 a 5 horas
____ 2. 2 a 3 horas
____ 3. 1 hora
____ 4. menos de una hora
____ 5. nunca

83. ¿Cuál es su descendencia étnica?
____ 1. Negro ____ 2. Blanco
____ 3. Hispano ____ 4. Asiatico
____ 5. Otro (Especifique) _____

84. ¿Cuál es su primera lengua?
____ 1. Ingles 2. Espanol
____ 3. Otro (Especifique) _____

85. ¿Cuál es su estado civil?
____ 1. Soltero ____ 2. Arrimado
____ 3. Casado ____ 4. Divorciado
____ 5. Viudo ____ 6. Separado

86. ¿Tiene usted hijos?
____ 1. No ____ 2. Si Cuantos? ____

87. ¿Estuvo usted en el servicio militar?
____ 1. Sí ____ 2. No

88. ¿Cuál fué el ultimo grado que su papá completó en la escuela? _____

89. ¿Cual fué el último grado que su mamá completó en la escuela? _____

90. ¿Cual es/era la ocupación de su papá? _____

91. ¿Cual es/era la ocupación de su mamá? _____

92. ¿Estuvieron sus padres o guardianes en la Beneficiencia Publica (Welfare)?
____ 1. Sí Especifique por cuanto tiempo _____
____ 2. No

93. ¿Cuántos ninos había en su familia? _____
____ 1. Numero de hermanos
____ 2. Numero de hermanas

94. ¿Alguno de sus hermanos o hermanas se ha salido de la escuela?,
____ 1. Sí ____ 2. No

95. ¿Alguien en su familia mas cercana (padre, madre, hermana, hermano, guardianes) a hecho tiempo en prision?
____ 1. Sí (Especifique) _____
_____
____ 2. No

96. ¿Cuáles son sus planes para el futuro?
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

MUCHAS GRACIAS POR CONTESTAR LAS PREGUNTAS MENCIONADAS ARRIBA. POR FAVOR AGREGUE CUALQUIER COMENTARIO QUE USTED QUIERA HACER SOBRE ESTE CUESTIONARIO. _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

APPENDIX D
CONTENT VALIDITY ANALYSIS

The questionnaire has the following objectives:

1) Profile the incarcerated male's educational, vocational and criminal history.
2) Profile the incarcerated male's personal and socio-economic background.
3) Ascertain the incarcerated male's general perception of school from his elementary grades to the time of last attendance.
4) Determine what image of self-perception characterized the incarcerated male when enrolled in school.
5) Determine the parental and school related support incarcerated male dropouts had prior to dropping out of school.
6) Identify the school and/or other related factors which incarcerated male dropouts believed led to their dropping out.
7) Ascertain how criminal dropouts view their decision to drop out and if they see their imprisonment related to their lack of high school completion.
8) Determine to what extent inmates utilize the school in prison.
9) Ascertain the criminal dropout's present perception of education and the future aspirations of all subjects surveyed.

Based on your personal judgment, place the objective number to the left of each question on the questionnaire which you feel most appropriately fits. If you feel a question does not appropriately address any of the nine objectives indicate this in the right margin. Also, please read each question to check for focus (i.e., see that it addresses only one issue). Check for clarity, grammar, ambiguity, use of simple words, short sentences and avoidance of negative and double-question items as well as leading questions. For closed questions review all answer choices for completeness.

In the space provided to the right of each question please indicate:

1) Any changes you think are appropriate based on the above.
2) Those questions that should be eliminated.
3) If additional questions should be added.
4) If the question order should be changed and how.

APPENDIX E
QUESTION BREAKDOWN BY OBJECTIVE

There are 30 questions addressing objective 1, i.e., profiling the incarcerated male's educational, vocational, and criminal history. Item numbers 2, 3, 4, 5, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 43, 45, 47, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 71, 72, 81, and 82.

There are 23 questions addressing objective 2, i.e., profiling the incarcerated male's personal, social, and economic background. Item numbers 1, 6, 34, 38, 44, 46, 48, 49, 50, 51, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94 and 95.

There are 14 questions addressing objective 3, i.e., ascertaining the incarcerated male's general perception of school from his elementary grades to the time of last attendance. Item numbers 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 21.

There are 3 questions addressing objective 4, i.e., determining what image of self-perception characterized the incarcerated male when enrolled in school. Item numbers 20, 23 and 37.

There are 6 questions addressing objective 5, i.e., determining the parental and school-related

support incarcerated male dropouts had prior to dropping out of school). Item numbers 39, 40, 41, 42, 66 and 67.

There are 4 questions addressing objective 6, i.e., identifying the school and/or other related factors which incarcerated males believed led to their dropping out. Item numbers 58, 59, 62 and 63.

There are 6 questions addressing objective 7, i.e., ascertaining how criminal dropouts view their decision to drop out and if they see their imprisonment related to their lack of high school completion. Item numbers 60, 61, 64, 65, 68, 69.

There are 7 questions addressing objective 8, i.e., determining to what extent inmates utilize the prison's educational system and why they attend school in prison. Item numbers 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79 and 80.

There are 3 questions addressing objective 9, i.e., ascertaining the criminal dropout's present perception of education and the future aspirations of all inmates surveyed. Item numbers 70, 73 and 96.

For easy reference, the number of each objective is recorded to the left side of its corresponding questions in Appendix B. For further clarity, objective 1 has been subdivided into three categories; objective 1a relates to educational history, 1b to vocational history, and 1c to criminal history.